

# JFQ



Issue 58, 3<sup>d</sup> Quarter 2010

## **IDENTITY POLITICS in Africa and the Americas**

**Grand Strategic  
Issues**

**The Adapting Warfighter  
and Education**

JOINT FORCE QUARTERLY

Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE <b>2010</b>		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2010 to 00-00-2010</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Joint Force Quarterly. Issue 58, 3rd Quarter 2010</b>				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>National Defense University, 260 Fifth Avenue, S.W. (Building 64, Room 2505), Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, DC, 20319</b>				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT <b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>	18. NUMBER OF PAGES <b>128</b>	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			

# Inside

Issue 58, 3<sup>d</sup> Quarter 2010

Editor **Col David H. Gurney, USMC (Ret.)**  
gurneyd@ndu.edu

Executive Editor **Jeffrey D. Smotherman, Ph.D.**

Supervisory Editor **George C. Maerz**

Production Supervisor **Martin J. Peters, Jr.**

Senior Copy Editor **Calvin B. Kelley**

Book Review Editor **Lisa M. Yambrick**

Visual Design Editor **Tara J. Parekh**

Copy Editor/Office Manager **John J. Church, D.M.A.**

Internet Publications Editor **Joanna E. Seich**

Design **Chris Dunham, Jeremy Swanston, and  
Jamie Harvey, U.S. Government Printing Office**

Printed in St. Louis, Missouri



NDU Press is the National Defense University's cross-component, professional military and academic publishing house. It publishes books, policy briefs, occasional papers, monographs, and special reports on national security strategy, defense policy, national military strategy, regional security affairs, and global strategic problems.

This is the authoritative, official U.S. Department of Defense edition of *JFQ*. Any copyrighted portions of this journal may not be reproduced or extracted without permission of the copyright proprietors. *Joint Force Quarterly* should be acknowledged whenever material is quoted from or based on its content.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Please visit NDU Press and *Joint Force Quarterly* online at [ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu) for more on upcoming issues, an electronic archive of *JFQ* articles, and access to many other useful NDU Press publications. Constructive comments and contributions are important to us. Please direct editorial communications to the link on the NDU Press Web site or write to:

Editor, *Joint Force Quarterly*  
National Defense University Press  
260 Fifth Avenue, S.W. (Building 64, Room 2505)  
Fort Lesley J. McNair  
Washington, DC 20319

Telephone: (202) 685-4220/DSN 325  
FAX: (202) 685-4219/DSN 325  
Email: [gurneyd@ndu.edu](mailto:gurneyd@ndu.edu)  
*JFQ* online: [ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu)

3<sup>d</sup> Quarter, June 2010  
ISSN 1070-0692



## JFQ Dialogue

- 2 Letters to the Editor

## Forum

- 4 Executive Summary
- 6 "Africa's Future Is Up to Africans": Putting the President's Words into Action  
*By William E. Ward and Thomas P. Galvin*
- 13 Misinterpreting Ethnic Conflicts in Africa *By Clement Mweyang Aapengnuo*
- 18 Ethnic Politics, Defense, and Security in "Latin" America *By Martin Edwin Andersen*  
*Clan, the State, and War: Lessons from the Far North By Barry S. Zellen*
- 26 Regional Threats: Security Capacity Imperatives in the Caribbean  
*By Curtis A. Ward*
- 32 The Age of Irregular Warfare: So What? *By Sebastian L.v. Gorka*

## Special Feature

- 39 Reorienting Grand Strategy: The Promise of Single-equilibrium  
Defense Planning *By Timothy J. Junio and Jonathan Protz*
- 45 Stabilization Operations: A Successful Strategy for Postconflict Management  
*By James P. Terry*
- 48 USCYBERCOM: The Need for a Combatant Command versus a  
Subunified Command *By David M. Hollis*
- 54 The End of Surface Warships *By Thomas E. Shrader*
- 57 Unmanned Systems and the Joint Team *By Michael W. Isherwood*

## Commentary

- 62 Are We Professionals? *By Kevin M. Bond*
- 69 When Do We Teach the Basics? *By Donald E. Vandergriff*
- 75 The Post-9/11 American Serviceman *By Adam B. Lowther*
- 82 Developing Air Force Strategists: Change Culture, Reverse Careerism  
*By Scott A. Bethel, Aaron Prupas, Tomislav Z. Ruby, and Michael V. Smith*

## Features

- 89 Military Dissuasion: A Framework for Influencing PLA  
Procurement Trends *By Eric Sayers*
- 94 Off and Running: The Middle East Nuclear Arms Race *By Richard L. Russell*
- 100 Through a Jingzi, Darkly *By Dean Cheng*





# JFQ

## Recall

- 105** Terrorists and Submarines: Lessons for Afghanistan from the Antisubmarine Campaign of World War I *By John T. Kuehn*

## Book Reviews

- 109** A Tactical Ethic: Moral Conduct in the Insurgent Battlespace  
*Reviewed by James P. Terry*
- 110** Power and Responsibility: Building International Order in an Era of Transnational Threats *Reviewed by John W. Sutherlin*
- 111** American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a New Era  
*Reviewed by Robert Daniel Wallace*
- 112** The Tradition of Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons *Reviewed by Jason Wood*

## Joint Doctrine

- 113** The Social Sciences and Innovation in Gaming *By Margaret M. McCown*
- 115** Joint Doctrine Update
- 116** Time for the Deconstruction of Field Manual 3-24 *By Gian P. Gentile*
- 118** Constructing the Legacy of Field Manual 3-24 *By John A. Nagl*
- 121** Freeing the Army from the Counterinsurgency Straitjacket *By Gian P. Gentile*
- 123** Learning and Adapting to Win *By John A. Nagl*

## CORRECTION

Table 3. Economic Strength

Country	Gross Domestic Product (US\$B)	World Rank
United States	14,441,425	1
Japan	4,910,882	2
China	4,327,448	3
India	1,206,668	13
Australia	1,013,481	14
Indonesia	511,785	19
Vietnam	89,029	80

Source: International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, October 2009

In JFQ 57, the data included in table 3 of Walter C. Ladwig III, "India and the Balance of Power in the Asia-Pacific," were incorrect. At left are the correct data for this table.



## ABOUT THE COVERS

Front cover: Soldiers detain indigenous man during state of emergency near Quito, Ecuador, to curb protests (AP Images/Fernando Vergara).  
Table of contents (left to right): Air Force Chief Master Sergeant briefs personnel on cyber and space threats (U.S. Air Force/Christian Thomas); Soldiers work in computer laboratory at NCO Academy Warrior Leaders Course (Joint Multinational Training Command); President Obama speaks with King Abdullah II of Jordan during Nuclear Security Summit (White House/Pete Souza); and USS *Nimitz* Carrier Strike Group operates in South China Sea (U.S. Navy/David Mercil).

## PUBLISHER

ADM Michael G. Mullen, USN

## PRESIDENT, NDU

VADM Ann E. Rondeau, USN

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Col Michael Belcher, USMC Marine Corps War College  
Richard K. Betts Columbia University  
BG Edward C. Cardon, USA U.S. Army Command and General Staff College  
Gen James E. Cartwright, USMC The Joint Staff  
Maj Gen Maurice H. Forsyth, USAF Air War College  
RADM Garry E. Hall, USN Industrial College of the Armed Forces  
LtCol Frank G. Hoffman, USMCR (Ret.) Department of the Navy  
Brig Gen Jimmie C. Jackson, Jr., USAF Air Command and Staff College  
Carnes Lord U.S. Naval War College  
Col Jerome M. Lynes, USMC (Ret.) The Joint Staff  
John A. Nagl Center for a New American Security  
LtGen John M. Paxton, USMC The Joint Staff  
Col David A. Smarsh, USAF Naval Postgraduate School  
Brig Gen Marvin T. Smoot, USAF Joint Forces Staff College  
ADM James G. Stavridis, USN U.S. European Command  
Maj Gen Robert P. Steel, USAF National War College  
LtGen Bernard E. Trainor, USMC (Ret.)  
RADM James Wisecup, USN Naval War College

## EDITORIAL BOARD

Richard K. Betts Columbia University  
Stephen D. Chiabotti School of Advanced Air and Space Studies  
Eliot A. Cohen The Johns Hopkins University  
COL Joseph J. Collins, USA (Ret.) National War College  
Mark J. Conversino Air War College  
Aaron L. Friedberg Princeton University  
Col Thomas C. Greenwood, USMC (Ret.) Institute for Defense Analyses  
Alan L. Gropman Industrial College of the Armed Forces  
Douglas N. Hime Naval War College  
Mark H. Jacobsen Marine Corps Command and Staff College  
CAPT John F. Kirby, USN The Joint Staff  
Daniel T. Kuehl Information Resources Management College  
Col Jerome M. Lynes, USMC (Ret.) The Joint Staff  
Thomas L. McNaughton The RAND Corporation  
Kathleen Mahoney-Norris Air Command and Staff College  
Col Mark Pizzo, USMC (Ret.) National War College  
James A. Schear Office of the Secretary of Defense  
LtGen Bernard E. Trainor, USMC (Ret.)

## CONTRIBUTIONS

*Joint Force Quarterly* welcomes submission of scholarly, independent research from members of the Armed Forces, security policymakers and shapers, defense analysts, academic specialists, and civilians from the United States and abroad. Submit articles for consideration to the address on the opposite page or by email to JFQ1@ndu.edu "Attention A&R Editor" in the subject line. For further information, see the guidelines on the NDU Press Web site at ndupress.ndu.edu.

*Joint Force Quarterly* is published by the National Defense University Press for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. JFQ is the Chairman's flagship joint military and security studies journal designed to inform members of the U.S. Armed Forces, allies, and other partners on joint and integrated operations; national security policy and strategy; efforts to combat terrorism; homeland security; and developments in training and joint professional military education to transform America's military and security apparatus to meet tomorrow's challenges better while protecting freedom today.

The opinions, conclusions, and recommendations expressed or implied within are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any other agency of the Federal Government.

[ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu)

# LETTERS

**To the Editor**—In *JFQ* 57, the article by RAND's Seth Jones ("Community Defense in Afghanistan"), a scholar on and a SOF staff advisor in Afghanistan, was particularly timely. This is not surprising since his latest book, *In the Graveyard of Empires*, is the best book on the market about the current war in Afghanistan. In his article, Jones argues for "the development of local defense forces" as adjuncts to the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP).

While Jones is correct in noting that security from 1929 to 1978—a golden age of stability for Afghanistan—required the efforts of both national and local forces, the training, equipping, and legitimizing of local security forces carries with it many risks. When we considered these risks back at the start of the insurgency, we decided not to start local defense units for many of these reasons. While counterinsurgency is all about protecting the population, the formation of local militia—paid or unpaid—in the absence of some coherent official police or army forces could lead to score settling, the escalation of intratribal violence, and even, *in extremis*, the reinforcement of local insurgents. Indeed, the tough problem of warlordism that still bedevils some areas of Afghanistan began with the consolidation of armed units in the absence of central authority. While it is correct to note that Afghanistan has never had a powerful central state apparatus, from 1929 to 1978 there were governments that clearly controlled the major cities and were recognized as legitimate by tribal and other local groupings in the provinces.

Local militia or community defense forces can play an important role in protecting the population. The Taliban's barbaric excesses have alienated many tribes, and they are motivated to defend themselves. As Jones would no doubt agree, however, local militias must genuinely represent the local population, be under the control of Afghan police or military officials, and have the capacity to react quickly to defend their communities. These are tall orders. For example, the ANA and the ANP do not have an excess of qualified officers and noncommissioned officers that they could use to supervise local defense units. Where will the government's oversight elements come from? If they are not being paid and equipped, what incentive will the defense forces have to well

and faithfully carry out their duties? If community defense forces become a mere extension of U.S. Special Operations Forces, then this endeavor is likely to fail, or worse, backfire.

A risk even greater than standing up local defense units comes from pundits and foreign officials who, holding a low opinion of the Karzai government, want to bypass the national government and work with province, district, and sub-district entities who allegedly show more promise. While we need to do more work at the local level, there will be no sane exit strategy for the United States and its coalition partners without a national government and national security forces that can take care of Afghanistan's security and welfare. To bring this about, we need to redouble our efforts to build Afghan government capacity—national, provincial, and local. As we are advising and mentoring the security forces, we need to do the same with the national government, its ministries, and its local appointees.

The United States for a decade has preached in its advisory and development activities that "teaching men to fish is better than providing them fish." The truth of the matter is, however, that we are superb at "providing fish" and not at all good at teaching and mentoring Afghans or other indigenous folks. As we work on building local self-defense forces, we need to redouble our efforts at building up the institutions of governance that one day will enable the state of Afghanistan to stand on its own two feet. If this does not come to pass, we will fail.

—Joseph J. Collins  
Professor, National War College

**To the Editor**—I enjoyed reading "The Accidental Strategist" by John M. Collins in *JFQ* 57 (2<sup>d</sup> Quarter 2010). As an accidental strategist myself, I could appreciate Collins's story of how his calling was more due to chance and opportunity than the intentional efforts of his Service to educate and train him for his future role. As I read further in the issue, I realized that the role of strategist is not the only one in the joint force that is often filled "by accident." The juxtaposition of "The Accidental Strategist" and C. Spencer Abbot's "Educate to Cooperate" may itself have been accidental, but it was a fortuitous pairing in that it calls attention to a similar problem in the way we train and select our joint liaisons.

While there are dedicated organizations for joint liaison, there is often not a dedicated force to man them. Rather than asking, "Who has the specific skill sets to interface with other components and organizations?" the determin-

ing factor often is, "Who is available?" or worse: "Who is expendable?" Traditionally, liaison assignments are temporary, with few prerequisites for selection other than tactical expertise in one's own specialty. Liaison tours were often seen as obstacles to advancement in one's own Service, and were even sometimes dispensed as punishment to those failing to perform at home. This kind of thinking is extremely shortsighted and fails to appreciate the synergy that effective liaison can create. While this has been largely recognized, and more emphasis has been given to sending the sharpest troops forward, I doubt any of the Services have fully embraced the true value of the liaison, and changed the way they prepare and select members to serve in these roles.

Having separate Services and functional components is a good thing; we should never advocate for one homogenous purple force. *Specialization* is good; it allows us to focus on areas of core competency that come naturally to us due to our organizational culture, foundational skills, and individual areas of passion and interest. It fosters the creative competition at lower levels that encourages depth and adaptability at higher levels of cooperation, giving the joint force a diverse selection of tools to allow adaptation to unanticipated contingencies.

However, *stovepiping* is bad; organizations that do not talk to one another develop incompatible tools and concepts that do not sync up at higher levels of cooperation, creating "either/or" dilemmas for commanders who must either choose between incompatible combinations of ways and means, or attempt to create piecemeal strategies that were not initially designed to work together.

How do we balance healthy levels of competition and cooperation, and use the former to encourage the variety that provides the long-term ability to adapt to uncertain conditions? We create liaison elements at appropriate levels to manage the flow of information at levels where they reinforce each other without destroying specialization. In the joint force, this means interface at the operational level of organizations.

We need to create a dedicated middle level of specialists specifically trained and educated to serve as the translators between different military cultures, to grease the wheels of bureaucracy, and to help us manage flows rather than specific pieces of the process. Properly trained liaisons should be able to speak the languages of both the home and the assigned service, which will also be invaluable to them in future positions of leadership within their

own Service. Good liaison is not a “part-time gig”—it is a career-spanning endeavor that one never completely masters.

The skills needed to serve as the interface between Services and components cannot be imparted overnight. Good liaisons need familiarity with at least two different Services’ organizations and operational concepts to suggest useful ways to link them. The skills needed to do this cannot be guaranteed by successful execution at the tactical level; it requires managerial expertise, social skills, historical context, and creative thinking. In essence, we need liaisons who are strategists of bureaucracy, who can help the strategists make big-picture concepts into practical results at the organizational level. By focusing specific efforts on how we identify, train, educate, and reward the people who serve as liaisons, we will enjoy benefits that will take us beyond Goldwater-Nichols to that next level of jointness.

—Major David J. Lyle, USAF

**To the Editor—**Professor Brent J. Talbot’s argument in “Israel and the Iranian Nuclear Infrastructure” (*JFQ* 56, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010) passively condones another Middle East war by wrongly concluding that the only U.S. recourse to a near-certain Israeli attack against Iran is to “prepare for the inevitable aftermath.” Acquiescence to such a scenario would be as misplaced for U.S. collective interests in the Middle East as is Professor Talbot’s apocalyptic view of Iran’s intentions toward Israel.

Absent from the article is any consideration as to why Iran would initiate a first strike attack on Israel. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s spew is unconscionable, but it does not translate into an intent to launch a nuclear missile against Israel. Many analysts interpret his exhortations as aimed at rallying the “Arab street” and showing that a Persian leader cares more about the Palestinians than Arab leaders. But this pro-Palestinian rhetoric has proven largely empty: during Israel’s 3-week assault against Gaza, Iran offered no credible threats against Israel, nor did it pressure neighboring Arab states to intervene to stop the carnage. Iran similarly left its Hizballah allies to their fate during Israel’s 2006 war in southern Lebanon. And rather than endanger larger economic and political interests, Iran remained relatively silent when Russia and China violently repressed militant Islamic activists in Chechnya and among the ethnic Uyghurs in the Xinjiang region.

This behavior is illustrative of a regime that calculates its national state interests. The world understands that Israel is a nuclear weapons state with land-, sea-, and air-based delivery systems and that the Jewish state would retaliate if Iran attacked. There is no rational reason to believe that Iran’s leadership would commit suicide. The political crackdown in Iran following the June 2009 sham elections underscores Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and Ahmadinejad’s intent to hold on to political power at whatever cost. Is it reasonable to believe they would throw it all away just to hoot from their perches in Paradise that they stamped out the “Zionist entity”? The substantial personal investments of the ideologically passionate Revolutionary Guard’s leadership in key sectors of the Iranian economy should temper its itch to launch an unnecessary war; even zealots want to preserve their power and affluence.

Finally, a nuclear strike on Israel would likely destroy Jerusalem, a revered Muslim holy place, as well as kill a substantial portion of the more than 1.5 million Israeli Muslim Arabs (23 percent of Israel’s population) and perhaps a chunk of the 4 million Muslims who reside in the West Bank and Gaza. Such death and destruction certainly would not be viewed as a victory in Iran or the Muslim world.

All this does not mean that Israel should assume that the lambs and lions of the Middle East are about to lie down peacefully with one another. Israel rightfully must be vigilant in its self-defense, but Professor Talbot too easily dismisses Israel’s preeminent military might by invoking Israel’s so-called national security culture. Israel may be haunted by the Holocaust, but that has not resulted in a monolith of strategic thinking. Not all Israeli leaders adopt the view that Iran is an undeterable mortal threat. Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak rejects such an argument. Why? Because “Iran well understands,” Barak explained, “that an act of this sort would set her back thousands of years.”

The claim that Iran is on the verge of acquiring a nuclear weapon is similarly misplaced. General James Cartwright, USMC, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, offered a more accurate assessment. Testifying in April 2010 before the Senate Armed Services Committee, General Cartwright estimated that Iran was 3 to 5 years from constructing a nuclear weapon. Moreover, that assessment may have been overly confident about Iran’s technological prowess: Cartwright’s judgment included Iran achieving *simultaneous* success

in acquiring a sufficient amount of highly enriched uranium, assembling a workable bomb, and constructing an accurate missile. But even this presupposes that the Iranian regime has decided to build a bomb, a verdict lacking any evidentiary support.

The suggestion that an Israeli strike on Iran would result in only marginal consequence to U.S. interests is also flawed. A December 2009 Brookings Institution wargame scenario where Israel attacked Iran witnessed the escalation of fighting that broadened to include Lebanon and Gaza, terrorist hits in Israel and Europe, missile strikes against Saudi oil fields, attacks on oil tankers, the mining of the Strait of Hormuz, and ultimately, massive U.S. military intervention in the Gulf region. The Brookings game was silent on the possible consequences for U.S. personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan, but it certainly would endanger them and complicate U.S. plans. In January, a study group of senior military officers organized under the direction of General David Petraeus reportedly warned Admiral Michael Mullen that Arab leaders believed the United States incapable of standing up to Israel and that Israeli intransigence on the Israel/Palestine conflict was jeopardizing U.S. standing in the region. An attack on Iran would only make matters far worse.

The penalty of a strike on U.S. standing in Muslim majority countries would be destructive. Washington currently is at war in four Muslim countries (Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Somalia). The Arab world and other majority Muslim countries would view the United States as wholly complicit in any Israeli attack. It would be viewed as a Christian state supporting a Jewish state to make war against a Muslim state. President Barack Obama’s vow to reach out to the Muslim world would be dashed.

Israel and the United States must remain close allies, and Washington must defend the Jewish state from unprovoked attacks. In support of Israel, Washington could publicly state that it would retaliate against any country that launched a nuclear attack against Israel; likewise, Israel could drop its policy of nuclear ambiguity and publicly enunciate a nuclear deterrence policy. Reining in Israel could get politically ugly. But Washington cannot permit itself to be drawn into a war of Israel’s making. The costs to American interests would be too great.

—Rex Wingerter  
Administrator, MiddleEastReads.com.





Agence France-Presse

Dominican Republic official, presidents of Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Bolivia, and former president of Honduras participate in celebration of Ecuador's independence from Spain (Left to right: Professor Nelson Jose Ramirez, Daniel Ortega, Hugo Chávez, Evo Morales, and José Manuel Zelaya)

*In pursuit of [their] goals, leaders of Al Qaeda and its regional affiliates frequently make appeals for support based on a wide range of political positions and, at times, attempt to harness nationalist sentiment or manipulate local grievances to generate support for their agenda.*

— Congressional Research Service  
February 5, 2010

In this issue, *Joint Force Quarterly* explores potential sources of fuel for regional and global insurgencies, energizing sources for which military remedies are few. In the May–June edition of *Foreign Affairs*, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates predicted that “the most lethal threats to [U.S.] safety and security are likely to emanate from states that cannot adequately govern themselves or secure their own territory.” However, many such countries in Africa and the Americas feature postcolonial ethnic barriers to upward mobility, deviations from which threaten castes in national leadership. If the future effectiveness and credibility of the United States will only be as good as the “effectiveness, credibility, and sustainability of its local partners,” what is the United States to do about allies whose domestic policies, power maintenance, and cultural priorities generate precisely the hopelessness and disaffection that transnational terror groups target for exploitation? When does the objective of “building partner capacity” to defend themselves and fight alongside U.S. forces become an impediment to correcting social injustice for indigenous citizens who populate the lower and frequently disconnected strata in these countries? U.S. engagement strategies must be adroitly crafted to obtain regional stability without the unintended and undesirable consequences of perpetuating social inequities that feed transnational terror agendas.

The Forum begins with a timely update from the commander of U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM), General Kip Ward, teamed with the director of his action group, Colonel Tom Galvin, who propose that U.S. interests in their area of responsibility are best served by the stability that follows economic and social advancement through good governance. The authors outline five priority areas for U.S. regional strategy that require long-term engagement and may involve “occasional setbacks.” Contrary to public perception, the activities of USAFRICOM are closely coordinated with the U.S. Chiefs of Mission, and the disparity of comparative resources and visibility should not be misinterpreted by outside observers. The primary role of USAFRICOM is to build partner security capacity in constructive competencies such as peacekeeping, counter-insurgency, and maritime security rather than in conventional warfare skill sets. Small-scale incremental developments on all fronts are being reinforced and orchestrated to promote a more favorable climate for other critical priorities, such as economic opportunity and public health. America’s newest geographic combatant command plays a quiet yet well-coordinated supporting role in promoting African self-determination.

Our second Forum offering comes from Father Clement Aapengnuo, the former Director of the Center for Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies in Damongo, Ghana, who

seeks to dispel the widespread perception that Africa is trammled to an endless cycle of ethnic conflict developed over centuries, presenting an irresistible inertia. While ethnic identification is the predominant means of social identity formation in Africa, it is typically *not* the animating factor in conflict. Father Clement asserts that ethnicity is a favored tool of politicians intent upon mobilizing “supporters in pursuit of power, wealth, and resources.” In fact, he finds interracial cooperation more the norm than the exception. The well-publicized strife in Rwanda between Hutus and Tutsis is motivated more by resources and power than barely distinguishable physical, language, or religious differences. The author argues that virtually all conflicts in Africa can be traced to emotional attitudes of perceived injustice, lack of recognition, and exclusion from resources and power. In his own words: “People do not kill each other because of ethnic differences; they kill each other when these differences are promoted as the barrier to advancement and opportunity.” Because there is a human tendency to reinforce intergroup differences, a rapid response capability within the security sector must be established to quell tensions before they get out of hand.

In the third Forum installment, Professor Martin Andersen of National Defense University’s (NDU’s) Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies addresses “a new dynamism” that has emerged between indigenous communities in Latin America and their national governments. When Europeans conquered the native populations of Central and South America, huge swaths of Indian groups remained largely isolated from urban centers where capital cities and major centers of commerce were located and dominated by white and mestizo elites observing new cultural traditions. The primary interface between these governments and unincorporated populations has been the military and other assorted security forces operating in remote areas and serving as a less than ideal conduit for native assimilation via conscription. The attendant training has imposed the abandonment of native language and culture in favor of “modern” traditions.

The passage of time has not served to reconcile these populations. On the contrary, Native Americans have grown increasingly restive in the face of persistent social barriers to advancement and other points of friction, challenging the status quo and thereby

threatening those in positions of power. In Peru and Ecuador and from Bolivia to Nicaragua—where the entire eastern region has been declared an independent state by the indigenous—there is potential for a “geostrategic hecatomb.” Professor Andersen argues that in Latin America, the military plays a dual role of defending the state against external foes while simultaneously enforcing government control over the national population. With millions of people in Latin America living outside the myriad benefits of democracy, the unfinished business of decolonization, particularly within state security and defense establishments, must continue with greater haste.

As a sidebar to Professor Andersen’s contribution, the Naval Postgraduate School’s Barry Zellen contrasts the loss of indigenous sovereignty through force in southern climes with its loss and steady recovery in the Arctic through soft power and treaty negotiation. There are many lessons in this short yet insightful essay that reveal the mutual value of accommodating and preserving indigenous culture through mediation.

The fourth article carries the Forum’s topical inquiry to America’s doorstep. Ambassador Curtis Ward argues for proactive measures against transnational crime in the Caribbean to prevent the development of “cataclysmic security events.” The Ambassador underscores the increasingly urgent refrain that the United States has not kept pace with regional security and development imperatives and asks: “which comes first?” Threats from increasingly sophisticated transnational crime and terrorism are forcing Caribbean countries to adjust their priorities without the necessary resources to obtain success. The underpinnings for stability and security on America’s “third border” are economic growth and development, as well as ensuring democracy, good governance, and the rule of law.

Our concluding essay finds its way into the Forum because it ties the preceding manuscripts to the potential for irregular war on new fronts, and as extensions of current conflict. Dr. Sebastian Gorka of NDU’s College of International Security Affairs wonders whether increasingly dear national security resources should be spent on defusing the root causes behind violent extremism, or aimed more directly at the irregular forces arrayed against vital U.S. interests. If the latter, Dr. Gorka begins his

investigation where Sun Tzu would have it: a clear-eyed self-assessment. He concludes that despite new capabilities and doctrine, the U.S. national security establishment is entrenched and inflexible.

His analysis then moves to the context of contemporary actors in the global security environment and core assumptions that animate U.S. strategic analysis and planning. For the balance of his work, he examines irregular warfare through a familiar, yet evolved, Clausewitzian prism, where the Westphalian era’s triangle of government, governed, and defenders of the state is displaced by ideologues, global sympathizers, and nonstate threat group(s). He asserts that the most obvious change to the Prussian theorist’s model is the sheer magnitude of resources that the enemy can potentially bring to bear in the modern era. Dr. Gorka concludes with the observation that today we face a foe who is aware that war starts with—and depends upon—ideas far more than it does upon weapons.

Not unlike a virus, al Qaeda has evolved under pressure and its affiliated movements similarly adapt or die in the ill-governed or ungoverned spaces of Africa and the Americas. Hard-pressed elements of the franchise increasingly abandon religious pieties and join with allies of opportunity to persevere in efforts to impose pseudo-religious tyranny. As political scientists Joshua Goldstein and Jon Pevehouse have observed, when social inequities and ethnic tensions cross the line from “who gets what” to “I don’t like you,” conflict is harder to resolve. This is precisely where transnational terror meets untapped opportunities for cooperation and safe harbor. The rise of powerful gangs in Central America and the self-serving activities of opportunistic politicians insinuating the destructive inefficiencies of socialism add to the complexity of theater security cooperation.

As Secretary Gates has noted, advising and mentoring indigenous security forces has moved from the periphery of institutional priorities, where it was considered the province of the Special Forces, to being a key mission for the Armed Forces as a whole. This is a core competency that, if adroitly executed, harbors the potential to preempt requirements for combat operations for decades to come. **JFQ**

—D.H. Gurney





White House (Pete Souza)

President Obama shakes hands with Ghanaian parliament members after speech on U.S. policy toward and priorities in Africa

# "Africa's Future Is Up to Africans"

## PUTTING THE PRESIDENT'S WORDS INTO ACTION

By WILLIAM E. WARD *and* THOMAS P. GALVIN

**P**resident Barack Obama's address in Accra, Ghana, in July 2009, signaled a pivotal moment for U.S. policy toward and priorities in Africa. Many in the United States increasingly recognize the growing importance of Africa in global affairs. With the President's address, U.S. leadership demonstrated this view publicly and laid out its priorities clearly and directly to an African audience.

Our national interests lie in a stable Africa, with the peoples of its continental and island nations living in relative peace, being governed relatively effectively, and enjoying relative economic and social advancement. Seeing Africa's populations able to provide for themselves and contribute to global economic development is good for America, as is access to African resources and markets in free, fair, and competitive ways.

The most significant theme of the address was that our nation's approach would start from the "simple premise that Africa's future is

---

General William E. "Kip" Ward is Commander, U.S. Africa Command. Colonel Thomas P. Galvin is Director of the Commander's Action Group and Special Assistant to the Commander, U.S. Africa Command.

up to Africans.”<sup>1</sup> While this may have been implied by previous U.S. National Security Strategies since the 9/11 attacks, much of the national security language was suggestive of the United States seeking to help fix problems and correct conditions in Africa that might foster transnational threats directed at the homeland. Even though the statement had been made that “overcoming the challenges [that] Africa faces requires partnership, not paternalism,”<sup>2</sup> African perceptions of increased U.S. attention were very different, as shown in the strategic communications shortfalls brought on by the establishment of U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) in 2007.<sup>3</sup>

President Obama laid out his five priority areas where the United States can contribute to a brighter future in Africa—democracy, opportunity, health, peaceful resolution of conflict, and addressing transnational challenges<sup>4</sup>—and alluded to how this should be done. With respect to democracy, he stated, “America will not seek to impose any system of government on any other nation. The essential truth of democracy is that each nation determines its own destiny.”<sup>5</sup> The President also noted the extent to which Africans have been dependent on international aid, saying, “The purpose of foreign assistance must be creating the conditions where it’s no longer needed.” This theme of pursuing self-reliance was resonant throughout the speech and was well received.

But how should this new policy be implemented from a U.S. national security perspective? Achievement in each of these priority areas requires long-term engagement and can be prone to occasional setbacks. While the President praised Ghana’s history of peaceful transfer of power, there have been recent extraconstitutional changes of power in Guinea and Madagascar. African opportunities for economic growth and development are being shackled by longstanding corruption that will take many years to remove. Conflict and the threat of conflict due to longstanding border disputes, unresolved ethnic tensions, large refugee populations, arms trafficking, and endemic poverty are complex and difficult problems, providing fodder for extremism. Progress against these challenges has been measurable. But to Americans concerned about threats emanating from Africa, the pace of transformational change seems unacceptably slow.

Making matters even more complex is the unfortunate fact that some within the

United States, in Africa, and around the world have come to equate USAFRICOM with the main African effort of our nation. Those who have worked with the command know that it acts in support of U.S. foreign policy objectives and that its activities only occur with the input and approval of U.S. Chiefs of Mission. But the level of resources and high visibility that come with the U.S. military contribute to a perception of the geographic combatant command, rather than the Embassy, being the “face of the franchise,” so to speak.

Operationalizing these priorities, each of which involves diplomacy and development, places a premium on all U.S. agencies

---

*those who have worked with the command know that it acts in support of U.S. foreign policy objectives and that its activities only occur with the input and approval of U.S. Chiefs of Mission*

---

working collaboratively among the so-called 3Ds of diplomacy, development, and defense. From a security and stability perspective, it is more than *what* we contribute to the effort: it is *how* we contribute and whether the ultimate goal is achieved—Africans determining their own future.

### Five Priorities for Africa

The priorities listed in the President’s speech are straightforward and did not, in and of themselves, signal anything new. After all, the United States has been globally promoting democracy and opportunity in one form or another since the early days of the Cold War. But it was the words behind the priorities that were significant, and where the policy direction for the U.S. military comes from.

**Democracy.** The President made clear that democracy was “more than just holding elections. It’s also about what happens between elections.”<sup>6</sup> He described the importance of good governance, implemented through stable and effective institutions such as “strong parliaments, honest police forces, independent judges, an independent press, a vibrant private sector, [and] a civil society.”<sup>7</sup> While some African nations have these, others are hampered by corruption driven by money and ethnicity, or by an inability or unwillingness to extend governance outside the capital and major economic centers of activity.

The impacts on African militaries are staggering. Lacking the means and institutions to provide for effective and ready forces, several nations have difficulties providing

basic equipment to their soldiers or even paying them. As a result, good order and discipline suffer. Furthermore, the influence of corruption erodes the professional sense of ethics that is well understood and taken for granted among developed nations.

**Opportunity.** Although this priority mostly concerns economic development, there are two areas with clear security implications: infrastructure and protection of vital resources.

Views from space of Africa at night clearly depict the current inadequate state of infrastructure development across the continent. Most of the development is concentrated on the coasts, while vast interior spaces lack

adequate roads, railroads, airports, power, or communications. Insufficient access to food or reliable water sources is a stressor on the people, stunting economic growth and sowing the seeds of conflict. Meanwhile, the continent is being robbed blind of its abundant natural resources. Illegal fishing is an excellent example, with nearly \$1 billion in lost revenues and food supply in sub-Saharan Africa in 2009.<sup>8</sup>

**Public Health.** Unquestionably, this is a concern for Americans, as Africa is home to several dangerous pandemic diseases. HIV/AIDS garners much attention, but malaria and tuberculosis are also major concerns. A lesser known factor is the impact of disease on the readiness of the security sector. United Nations (UN) Resolution 1308 was declared because of the impacts of HIV on UN peacekeeping missions. Meanwhile, poorly manned and equipped public health facilities leave both civilian and military populations vulnerable to illness.

**Prevention of Conflict.** President Obama stated, “For far too many Africans, conflict is a part of life. . . . There are wars over land and wars over resources. And it is still far too easy for those without conscience to manipulate whole communities into fighting among faiths and tribes.”<sup>9</sup>

While many of Africa’s bloody civil wars are over, not all of them have been resolved to the point of assuring no return to hostilities. Meanwhile, several known major hotspots remain. Somalia is foremost in many people’s minds because of piracy in the Gulf of Aden

and east Indian Ocean, while the Transitional Federal Government is fighting Islamic extremist groups. The Lord's Resistance Army continues its horrendous assault against the peoples among five central and eastern African nations of the Great Lakes region. Southern Sudan may pursue a referendum to secede from Sudan, which could be very contentious, while insurgent activity continues to affect the Darfur region. Tensions in the Niger Delta remain high, as does north-south friction across several nations in the Sahel.

Imposing peace from the outside through military force or coercion is not a

many neighboring nations in Africa have long histories of conflict. Building trust among them involves developing capabilities to share information and intelligence and operate under common sight pictures.

### What Africans Are Telling Us

The good news is that these priorities were consistent with the expressed desires of many African political and military leaders with whom we have engaged since our 2007 inception. They told us they also desire African solutions to African problems, especially in providing for their own security and

oppressors. They want effective and honorable armed forces that are sufficiently trained, equipped, and sustained to contribute to stability and that are free from corruption and indiscipline.

2. We are all striving for an Africa that bolsters and promotes legitimate and professional security institutions. Africans want their militaries to generally conform in roles and purposes to other militaries around the world. They want an end to irregular militias or forces loyal to the executive at the expense of the population. They want civil authority over the armed forces, under capable institutions that ensure the training, equipping, and sustaining of the units and the readiness and well-being of the servicemembers and their families.

3. We are all striving for an Africa that has the will and means to dissuade, deter,

*the borderless nature of terrorism, drug and arms trafficking, and the spread of extremist ideologies must be met by solutions based on regional cooperation—a conundrum given that many neighboring nations have long histories of conflict*

and defeat transnational threats. The African countries uniformly express a strong desire to have the capacity to deal with their own security issues, including greater abilities in peacekeeping and exporting security across the continent. This is true at the national level and theater-wide.

Lowering dependence on external assistance is contingent on the demonstrated ability to properly and proportionately employ security capabilities when and where needed. This is true at the national, regional, and theater levels, such that nations facing these threats can turn to neighbors, the Regional Economic Communities, or the African Union (AU) for support when needed.

African countries have been increasingly demonstrating the political will to overcome these challenges and take ownership of their security domain. For example, several nations banded together to dismantle significant elements of the Lord's Resistance Army. The partnership developing among the Gulf of Guinea nations to improve maritime security is another. The AU and its five Regional



U.S. Marine Corps (Nicole Teet)

Marine teaches Ghanaian soldier to use compass during military-to-military familiarization event

recipe for success; in fact, many of the embattled nations would resist. Life under colonialism is still well remembered and leaves a bitter aftertaste. Instead, keeping the hotspots cool is better left to the Africans, although they need assistance in the form of training and equipping their military peacekeeping units, as well as planning and sustaining operations.

#### Addressing Transnational Challenges.

Similarly, challenges such as terrorism, drug and arms trafficking, illegal migrations, and the spread of extremist ideologies must be addressed in order to prevent the onset of new tensions or exacerbation of existing ones. The borderless nature of these challenges must be met by solutions based on regional cooperation, which is itself a conundrum given that

stability in ways that serve to prevent future conflicts and promote the full resolution of existing ones. They recognized the post-independence legacy of some African militaries that served as protectors of the regime first or that have succumbed to corruptive influences, and instead want their armed forces to be seen as protectors of the people and legitimate representatives of the best values of their nations. As they provided us their views and perspectives, four common themes emerged, consolidated below as a shared security vision for Africa.

1. We are all striving for an Africa whose military elements perform professionally and with integrity. Africans want their militaries to serve as protectors of the people, not



Economic Communities are growing and maturing rapidly and are pursuing the formation of an African Standby Force of five brigades to respond in times of crisis.

4. We are all striving for an Africa whose militaries and governments increasingly support international peace efforts. Africans prefer to resolve conflicts and sustain peace in partnerships with fellow Africans, with or supported by the international community. Over time, they believe they can address underlying conditions that cause conflict. They also know that supporting peace efforts on other continents is good for Africa and for the world.

### Stability: The Overarching Need

Turning this vision into a reality requires stability in the short term that can be self-sustaining for the long haul. Nations must be generally free from the threat of violence such that economic development can continue, as seen with the continent's overall 2008 growth of 6 percent and 2009 growth of 1.75 percent, despite significant impacts from the global downturn.<sup>10</sup> The private sector needs encouragement to invest in African infrastructure, which can only happen if tensions can remain calm.

Stability is not a static condition; it will come about only through measurable progress

in the development of African security capacity across the spectrum: military, police forces, border security, customs, and the institutions that recruit, train, equip, sustain, and support them. It also comes about through the changes in attitudes and perceptions toward security forces among the people, through building trust and demonstrating capability, consistency, and proportionality when dealing with a threat.

Stability must come together at multiple levels—nationally, regionally, and across the whole continent, its island nations, and surrounding waters. As national governments build trust with their own people, nations must band together to confront common threats, lest the enemies of peace exploit the seams. Meanwhile, the AU is a young but growing organization that is increasingly playing a stronger political role on the continent, especially involving itself in the adjudication of crises. A strong AU keeps an African face on solutions in situations that are beyond the nations' abilities to address. The development of the AU African Standby Force (ASF) is an important step toward self-sustaining stability, as it provides a rapid reaction force for the continent, although this is a long-term endeavor to develop full capability. The Regional Economic Communities, which

will each contribute a brigade to the ASF, are themselves in different stages of development and representation of their constituencies.

This form of stability fosters an environment that encourages Africans to deter the enemies of peace, safeguard innocent civilians from violence and theft, cause violent extremist ideologies to be repudiated, and build mutual trust and respect between defense establishments and the people they are defending. Such an environment would facilitate the achievement of their security vision.

If we are to support the African pursuit of stability, we must embrace the commonalities while listening and learning about the differences. We readily agree that the scourges of violent extremism, kidnapping, piracy, narcotics, arms and human trafficking, and corruption are cancers that are holding African societies back from their fullest potential. We recognize that the perpetrators are merciless and cannot be appeased.

However, Africans see their environment differently than we do. In the recent past, terrorism was the chief U.S. concern. The current administration is equally concerned about ensuring the protection of innocent populations against genocide. Our African partners often have different priorities. We have found continuously that

Rwandan soldiers return to tents at Rwandan Military Academy, built in part with funds from Africa Contingency Operations Training Assistance program



U.S. Air Force (Samuel Bendet)

listening to and learning from our partners are vital to resolving differences in perspective and in our ability to provide support to African stability until they have the means to provide it for themselves.

### Pursuit of the Vision

Building partner security capacity is the primary role that USAFRICOM performs on a day-to-day basis. It is clear from the vision and stated national priorities that the traditional focus of security force assistance—the training and readiness of units—is but a very small part of the requirement. Our capabilities to build capacity must touch all domains (for example, ground, air, and maritime) and functions (for example, combat forces, logistics, intelligence, command and control, and medical). The outcomes are trained and ready forces that are capable across the spectrum of conflict, but are concentrated on those capabilities the Africans are requesting: peacekeeping, counterinsurgency, and maritime security rather than conventional warfare. And the

Our exercise series Africa Endeavor is a good example. Begun as a multinational communications interoperability exercise, the 2009 iteration hosted by Gabon involved 26 African countries, the greatest number of participants to date. Although the exercise is facilitated by USAFRICOM, it is governed by the participating nations. The Africans formed a steering committee that determines the locations of the exercise and all its planning conferences, along with the parameters and objectives. This ensures a steady progression in interoperability and cooperative spirit with which the participants are comfortable. It also avoids political challenges should the United States and any key participating nation experience differences that would lead others to question the exercise's true motivation.

Another example was Natural Fire, a combined tabletop and crisis response exercise involving 650 soldiers from five African nations plus 550 U.S. Servicemembers led by U.S. Army Africa (USARAF). The lead African nation was Uganda, which established

them through the process of formulating plans and conducting relief operations.

The following are some of the areas where we are concentrating our efforts.

**Building Effective Noncommissioned Officer Corps.** The noncommissioned officer (NCO) corps of the U.S. military provides critical small-unit leadership to Soldiers and units, and is the direct link to the senior leadership. Several African nations have NCO<sup>11</sup> corps that either are underdeveloped or are more vulnerable to corruptive influences. Some nations have NCOs with limited professional experience due to turmoil or transformational efforts. Our African partners, recognizing that stable NCO corps lead to more effective and sustainable units and security institutions, have turned to us for assistance.

By helping partners train and develop their NCOs, we have a greater chance of instilling the qualities that help those NCOs train and guide their own units. Such an approach is welcomed by many partners, including those with more mature NCO corps, as it requires fewer U.S. personnel than efforts to train whole units, and the results are longer lasting.

*some partners are saddled with training facilities that were sufficient for a conscription force focused on basic combat skills but are inadequate for professional forces operating across a wider spectrum*

**Building Support Capabilities.** Just as the U.S. military places its core competencies, such as training combat skills, first among all priorities, so do our partners. Yet as we know, our success has come from the development across our battlefield operating systems. We have won many wars through our supremacy in logistics, intelligence, fire support, command and control, and other areas. We have placed a premium on caring for our Servicemembers, providing them with top-notch medical, dental, financial, legal, religious, and family support that directly improves their readiness.

Many of our African partners have only rudimentary capabilities and must rely on outside assistance. For example, while African nations are receiving peacekeeping training



U.S. Navy (Roger S. Duncan)

Kenyan soldier distributes medication as part of multilateral exercise Natural Fire

processes must be unobtrusive to ensure that African ownership of newfound capacity is instilled from the beginning, when activities are being planned. This means that most of our activities are necessarily small in scale, yet their impact is tremendous.

the locations and parameters of the tactical portion with USARAF assistance. The other four nations—Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania—faced common challenges in dealing with major regional humanitarian crises, and the exercise was tailored to help



through the Africa Contingency Operations Training Assistance program, American or other international partners are still relied upon to deploy to and sustain peacekeeping operations they conduct.

**Building Special Staff Capabilities.** An important component of the U.S. military includes the functions performed by its special staffs that support the chain of command in enforcing standards and ethics. Many African partners have limited (if any) inspectors general, legal counsels, public affairs or strategic communicators, or chaplain programs.

Establishing these functions can have stabilizing effects on forces facing challenges or pressures from corruptive influences, internal ethnic divisions, or distrust from the civilian population. The USAFRICOM Office of the Inspector General develops its own capabilities that help increase transparency without sacrificing operational security and provides an additional voice for Servicemembers to address problems. The USAFRICOM Office of the Legal Counsel helps partners establish and improve their military justice systems; ensure that their activities follow the rule of law; and effectively, fairly, and judiciously prosecute crimes by military members. The USAFRICOM Office of the Chaplain helps partners bridge gaps across faith groups and promote diversity within the partners' forces.

Our special staff also promotes regional cooperation by encouraging counterparts to establish relationships with each

structure. ERC is military construction that supports overseas joint exercises through building or improving infrastructure in locations with no permanent U.S. presence. It provides great benefits for later conduct of joint and combined exercises, enhances the morale and quality of life among troops, and trains our military engineers. In fiscal year 2009, seven projects were performed at a cost of \$2.4 million, including runway construction and improvement and upgrades to training ranges.

**Promoting Formal Regional Cooperation.** Without question, our partners are growing more accustomed to working together at levels not seen before. Two Africa Partnership Station deployments in the Gulf of Guinea have both enhanced maritime capacity and encouraged intelligence and information-sharing among those partners at unprecedented levels. The threats of the Lord's Resistance Army in central Africa and al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in the north have similarly drawn nations together in response, including states that once warred against each other.

**Regional solutions** is a relative term that means different things to different people. For some, the tendency is toward the Regional Economic Communities. For others, it is a simple collective of one's immediate geographic neighbors. There are other manifestations. If the response matches the challenge rather than a broader abstract ideology or vision, it will

---

*because USAFRICOM is not the lead for our nation's foreign policy, we do not act until we garner concurrence and approval from the U.S. Ambassadors and Country Teams before implementing a program*

---

other, whether through conferences or direct contact. This enhances interoperability and regional cooperation among the militaries as a whole.

**Building and Improving Military or Dual-use Infrastructure.** Some of our African partners are saddled with old or dilapidated training facilities or bases that were sufficient for a conscription force focused on basic combat skills but are now inadequate for professional forces operating across a wider spectrum. Through programs such as Exercise-Related Construction (ERC), we leverage planned activities to improve our partners' military infra-

produce stronger and more lasting partnerships, and we should encourage them.

**Promoting African-led Strategic Dialogue.** Our experience is showing that the African people are growing more aware of their security challenges and feeling more empowered to address them. While not all will have the opportunity to contribute equally to the solution, the fact that the dialogue is taking place is important. We need to encourage and sustain this dialogue by expanding strategic communications opportunities and ensuring our actions and effects are consistent with what both our partner militaries and the people they serve



Nigerian soldier prepares to raise antenna during interoperability exercise Africa Endeavor 2008

are saying. This is also another way to foster regional efforts, built on shared trust, shared understanding, and shared responsibility.

### Reinforce Success

Naturally, the small scale of such activities means that followup is essential to help our partners turn the short-term gains into self-sustaining capabilities. This is more than a followup for its own sake; it is about helping ensure that the short-term benefits of our activities translate into progress toward the vision. Some of our approaches include:

#### **Leveraging the "Demonstration Effect."**

Although tailoring to our partners' needs is a must, successful programs and activities can often be applied elsewhere. We have found that word spreads when things go well, which helped lead to the expansion of some of our successful programs early on.

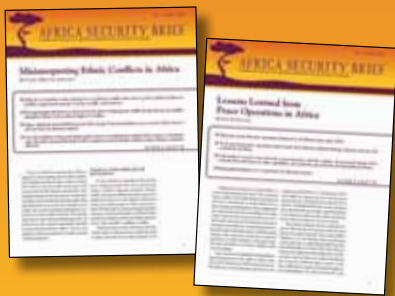
The Africa Partnership Station (APS) is an excellent example. Stemming from regional concerns about maritime security, two U.S. ships traveled up and down the Gulf of Guinea coast from late 2007 through early 2008, providing tailored training, exercises, education, and partnership opportunities based on the





for the  
**Africa Center for Strategic Studies**

**NEW**  
from **NDU Press**



The Africa Security Briefs series presents research and analysis by Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) experts and outside scholars with the aim of advancing understanding of African security issues. Published for ACSS by National Defense University Press, each issue is produced in English, French, and Portuguese editions (Portuguese edition available only online).

#### **Africa Security Brief No. 4**

*Misinterpreting Ethnic Conflicts in Africa*

By Clement Mweyang Aapengnuo

#### **Africa Security Brief No. 3**

*Lessons Learned from Peace Operations in Africa*

By Paul D. Williams



#### *Forging Partnerships for Africa's Future*

The Africa Center offers a variety of resources that keep readers abreast of the Africa-related news and research published on this site.

<http://africacenter.org/>

To subscribe to Africa Center's Daily Media Review and/or Africa Security Briefs, go to <http://africacenter.org/subscribe/>, enter email address, check the box next to the name of the newsletter(s) desired, and click the "Submit" button.

Visit the NDU Press Web site  
for more information on publications  
at [ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu)

## **FORUM | "Africa's Future Is Up to Africans"**

requests of participating nations. Additionally, APS brought along international staff and observers from European and African countries and nongovernmental organizations needing transportation to access populations they otherwise might not reach. This deployment was so successful that our partners wanted another one, and then another. Other nations saw the benefits and decided to participate. By the end of 2009, five APS deployments had been conducted, with one led by the Netherlands. In fiscal year 2010, we are hosting two more APS deployments, one each in east and west Africa, while the Belgian navy is also conducting APS in the Gulf of Guinea.

#### ***Demonstrating African Ownership.***

Although it seems counterintuitive, touting U.S. successes can sometimes be counterproductive. While we are clearly proud of the programs and activities we are performing, the stronger messages come from the successes the Africans themselves realize. Our role is instead to enable.

A recent example is what happened during an African Maritime Law Enforcement Program (AMLEP) deployment to a West African nation. AMLEP is a cooperative effort with the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Transportation, and U.S. Coast Guard that builds partner maritime law enforcement capacity and detects and deters illicit activities within partner nation Economic Exclusion Zones. It involves institution-building, as some nations lack the necessary judicial and legal processes to determine disposition of captured sailors and ships, and processing of evidence. As it turned out, the participating Coast Guard cutter, with embarked partner nation naval and law enforcement officials, found a foreign trawler stealing fish from unpatrolled waters. The illegal vessel was seized by host nation authorities, who took possession of the trawler and its contents and prosecuted its crew. Information gathered during the AMLEP rotation subsequently helped the nation make more effective use of its limited patrolling assets.

***Matching Actions with Words.*** There remain concerns and perceptions of the USAFRICOM role in U.S. activities on the continent being greater than that of other U.S. agencies. Rather than countering words with words, which does little to assure our partners, we act by example. Because USAFRICOM is not the lead for our nation's foreign policy, we do not act until we garner concurrence and approval from the U.S. Ambassadors and Country Teams before implementing

a program, and we reinforce this relationship when consulting with partners. They find this reassuring, as it shows them the benefits of proper civilian authority that ensures unity in pursuing national policy objectives and transparency that fosters trust. Thus, our partners have been comfortable working with us to pursue their long-term goals.

The U.S. Africa Command approach supports the defense aspects of the President's priorities by fostering the development of defense establishments—formations, facilities, and institutions—that serve its people in ways supportive of African goals. In turn, this helps grow stability that facilitates other priorities, such as opportunity and public health. Much of what we do is "under the radar," but, as the above shows, it is for a purpose. The President stated it best: "Africa's future is up to Africans." As a supporting partner in the U.S. Government effort in Africa, we ensure our actions are in keeping with that premise. By so doing, U.S. national interests are achieved in this important part of the world. **JFQ**

**Contributors:** Vice Admiral Robert T. Moeller, USN, Major General Michael A. Snodgrass, USAF, and Ms. Christina K. Dall.

## **NOTES**

<sup>1</sup> Barack Obama, "A New Moment of Promise in Africa," remarks at Accra International Conference Center, Accra, Ghana, July 11, 2009; available at <[www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Remarks-by-the-President-to-the-Ghanaian-Parliament/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-to-the-Ghanaian-Parliament/)>.

<sup>2</sup> *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, March 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Robert T. Moeller and Mary C. Yates, "The Road to a New Unified Command," *Joint Force Quarterly* 51 (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2008), 67–73.

<sup>4</sup> Obama. President Obama specified the first four, while alluding to the fifth.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> David Agnew et al., *The Global Extent of Illegal Fishing* (London: Marine Resources Assessment Group, 2008), 2.

<sup>9</sup> Obama.

<sup>10</sup> International Monetary Fund (IMF), *World Economic Outlook 2009: Sustaining the Recovery* (Washington, DC: IMF Publication Services, October 2009), 89.

<sup>11</sup> Among nations following the British system, the noncommissioned officer corps also includes warrant officers.

# Misinterpreting Ethnic Conflicts in Africa

By CLEMENT MWEYANG AAPENGNUO

Father Clement Mweyang Aapengnuo is a Doctoral Student in the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University. He is the former Director of the Center for Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies in Damongo, Ghana. This article was first published by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies as Africa Security Brief No. 4 (NDU Press, April 2010).

There is a general perception that Africa is trapped in a never-ending cycle of ethnic conflict. The Rwandan genocide, Darfur, northern Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, and the violent aftermath of the controversial Kenyan elections, among other cases, seemingly substantiate this perception. As grievances accumulate and are defined at the group rather than individual level, the motivation for reprisals is never ending. The centuries-old inertia behind these animosities, moreover, defies resolution. The seeming implication is that Africa's complicated ethnic diversity leaves the continent perpetually vulnerable to devastating internecine conflict. This, in turn, cripples prospects for sustained economic progress and democratization.

## **Ethnicity, Ethnic Mobilization, and Conflict**

In fact, ethnicity is typically not the driving force of African conflicts but a lever used by politicians to mobilize supporters in pursuit of power,

UN (Olivier Chassot)



Woman walks to water distribution site set up by African Union and United Nations Mission in Darfur



wealth, and resources. While the ethnic group is the predominant means of social identity formation in Africa, most ethnic groups coexist peacefully with high degrees of mixing through interethnic marriage, economic partnerships, and shared values. Indeed, if they did not, nearly every village and province in Africa would be a cauldron of conflict.

Ethnicity became an issue in Kenya's recent elections because of a political power struggle that found it useful to fan passions to mobilize support. It was not an autonomous driver of this postelectoral violence, however. While Daniel arap Moi's 25 years of governing through an ethnic minority-based patronage network did imprint group identity on Kenyan politics, there are many instances of cross-group cooperation. Most prominent were the formation of the Kenya African National Union by the Kikuyus and Luos in the 1960s to fight for independence and the creation of the National Rainbow Coalition to break the one-party stranglehold on power

In Rwanda, Hutus and Tutsis have intermarried to such an extent that they are often not easily distinguished physically. They speak the same language and share the same faith. Indeed, ethnic identity was closely associated with occupation (farmer or herder), and one's identification could change over time if one changed occupation. Violence in Rwanda has usually been over resources and power. Political manipulation of these resource conflicts led to the well-orchestrated 1994 genocide. Politicians, demagogues, and the media used ethnicity as a play for popular support and as a means of eliminating political opponents (both Tutsis and moderate Hutus).

In Ghana, the military government of General I.K. Acheampong decided in 1979 to vest all lands in the northern region in 4 of the 17 indigenous ethnic groups that lived in this area. At the time, the military was seeking an endorsement of one-party government. Since the proposal was subject to a national referendum, the government needed a "yes"

15 years, culminating in the Guinea Fowl War of 1994–1995 in which some 2,000 people were killed. During that time, more than 26 intercommunal conflicts over land (resources) and chieftaincy (power) occurred in northern Ghana, all characterized as ethnic conflicts.

Such a classification—in Ghana as in many other African conflicts—is an oversimplification. Indeed, many conflict scholars find the ethnic distinction baseless.<sup>1</sup> Often it is the politicization of ethnicity and not ethnicity per se that stokes the attitudes of perceived injustice, lack of recognition, and exclusion that are the source of conflict. The misdiagnosis of African conflicts as ethnic ignores the political nature of the issues. People do not kill each other because of ethnic differences; they kill each other when these differences are promoted as the barrier to advancement and opportunity. The susceptibility of some African societies to this manipulation by opportunistic politicians underscores the fragility of the nationbuilding enterprise on the continent.

In many cases, the political choices made by states lay the foundation for ethnic mobilization. In other words, "ethnic conflicts" often emerge in multiethnic, underdeveloped societies when the behavior of the state is perceived as dominated by a particular

*people do not kill each other because of ethnic differences; they kill each other when these differences are promoted as the barrier to advancement and opportunity*

group or community within it, when communities feel threatened with marginalization, or when no recourse for redressing grievances exists.<sup>2</sup> Ethnic thinking and mobilization generally emerge from the resulting inequitable access to power and resources and not from an intrinsic hatred.

Periodic eruptions of violence involving Christians and Muslims in Nigeria's highly diverse "middle-belt" Plateau State capital, Jos, are a case in point. This violence is usually reported as "communal conflict." This characterization, however, overlooks some of the institutional arrangements of Nigeria's federal system that foster this violence. State and local governments have enormous influence in this system, controlling roughly 80 percent of the



Independent electoral commissions can help avert ethnic violence during voting

in 2002. Intergroup cooperation, in fact, is the norm rather than the exception. Inter-marriage is common, and many of Kenya's youth, especially in urban areas, grew up identifying as Kenyans first, followed by ethnic affiliation. This is not to suggest that ethnically based tensions do not persist—rather, that the post-election bloodshed in 2007–2008 was not an inevitable outburst of sectarian hatred.

vote from the north to counter a "no" vote from the south. The land arrangement was the deal some northern politicians cut with the government for their support. The issue became a defining moment in the mobilization of ethnic groups such as the Konkomba and Vagla in the name of developing their area. The first intercommunal violence began shortly thereafter—and continued for the next



country's gross domestic product.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the implications for resource allocation, local governments are responsible for classifying citizens as "indigenes" or "settlers." Settlers are banned from holding some positions in state government, are not eligible for state education subsidies, and are restricted from owning land. In Plateau State, this translates into Hausa-speaking Muslims being classified as settlers even if their families have lived in the region for generations. The ongoing and at times violent tensions resulting from such an arrangement are predictable.

### Institutional Constraints

Recognizing that ethnicity is a tool and not the driver of intergroup conflict should refocus our attention to the political triggers of conflict. That there is a mobilization stage in the lead-up to conflict, moreover, highlights the value of early interventions before ethnic passions are inflamed.

State institutions and structures that reflect ethnic diversity and respect for minority rights, power-sharing, and checks and balances reduce the perception of injustice and insecurity that facilitates ethnic mobilization. The justice system is key. In societies where justice cannot be obtained through public institutions, groups are more likely to resort to violence for resolving their grievances. A just society is more than the legal system, however. A genuine separation of powers and the rule of law are needed to prevent abuses of state power. Such measures prevent state functionaries from using their powers to benefit their ethnic groups to the detriment of other groups. In much of Africa, the executive rather than the legislative branch determines most land policies. Invariably, the ethnic group of the president benefits from these policies. In Kenya, Kikuyus used the political and economic leverage available to them during Kenyatta's regime to form land-buying companies that facilitated the settlement of hundreds of thousands of Kikuyus in the Rift Valley during the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>4</sup>

An even-handed legal system also creates space for civil society organizations to coalesce around issues of common concern, such as development, accountability, and human rights transcending ethnic affiliations. This, in turn, facilitates exchanges between groups. Business associations, trade and professional associations, sports clubs, and artist groups, among others, are all civil society

Educational systems can promote common national identity among youth



U.S. Army (Julie Jaeger)

organizations that can cut across ethnic lines and engage government in productive ways.

Electoral systems and elections constitute another area of policy focus. Elections on their own do not necessarily lay the foundation for stability. On the contrary, they can be a source of ethnic tensions and violence. The practice of winner-takes-all electoral outcomes in a multiethnic and underdeveloped state where the government controls the bulk of resources makes winning an election a life-and-death issue. Accordingly, it is important that electoral systems are independent of political control. One of the differences between Kenya's and Ghana's recent elections was the independence and resilience of the Ghanaian electoral commission. Furthermore, once the Electoral Commission in Ghana has validated

another useful institutional mechanism for mitigating ethnic conflict. Backed by a constitutional act (Act 456), CHRAJ was mandated in 1993 to "investigate complaints of violations of fundamental rights and freedoms in both public and private sectors, investigate complaints of administrative injustice, abuse of power and unfair treatment of any person by a public officer in the exercise of official duties." The commission was also mandated to "educate the public on their fundamental rights and freedoms and their responsibilities towards each other." For the first time, Ghanaians could take government to task and have their grievances addressed immediately at the local level. Coming out of 12 years of military rule and entering a new democratic dispensation, the formation of the commission

*the practice of winner-takes-all electoral outcomes in a multiethnic and underdeveloped state where the government controls the bulk of resources makes winning an election a life-and-death issue*

electoral results, private groups then have the right to challenge irregularities in the courts. These multiple levels of accountability gave Ghanaians confidence in their electoral system despite a very close 2008 election.

Ghana's Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) provides

was timely. Apart from the constitutional mandate, funding was committed to support CHRAJ offices at the national, regional, and district levels. The fact that the commissioner was independent of executive influence gave the commission enormous credibility. It is also what distinguishes the CHRAJ from similar



Local security forces are often first responders to ethnic clashes

UN (Marie Frechon)

commissions in other countries. Since its inception, the commission has handled high-profile cases involving government ministers, unlawful dismissals involving the Inspector General of Police, and the confiscation of people's assets. In each of these high-profile cases, the court ruled in favor of the commission.

Religious bodies and local nongovernmental organizations have disseminated CHRAJ messages to the grassroots through workshops, seminars, and support for communities with grievances to present their case to the commission. With this infrastructure, education, and resources in place, Ghanaians have come to appreciate the value of the rule of law and the timely response to their grievances at the community, district, and regional levels.

### Mitigating Ethnic Conflict

Reframing ethnic conflicts as political competitions for power and resources should shift how we think about mitigation strategies. Rather than accepting identity conflict as an inevitable feature of Africa's highly diverse ethnic landscape, a number of preventative policy interventions can be pursued.

**Build Unifying Institutional Structures.** At the core of ethnic conflicts is the relationship between ethnic groups and the state in the search for security, identity, and recognition. How the state negotiates these interests and needs will determine the

level of identity conflicts. A comprehensive legal system that protects minorities from the abuse of state power, respects their rights, and ensures that their grievances are taken seriously will reduce opportunities for ethnic mobilization. Among other things, this requires equitable access to civil service jobs

*social marketing campaigns that promote national unity, intergroup cooperation, and "strength through diversity" themes can help frame the ethnic narrative in a positive light*

and the various services the state provides. Key among these state functions is minority participation within the leadership and ranks of the security sector. The military can be a unifying institution, building bonds between ethnic groups, helping to forge a national identity for all ethnicities, providing youth an opportunity to travel and live throughout the nation, and allowing minorities to advance to positions of leadership through merit. Diversity in the security sector also has tangible benefits as ethnically representative police forces are linked with lower levels of conflict in diverse societies.<sup>5</sup>

Elections are another flashpoint of ethnic grievances—and therefore a priority for mitigating violence. Elections present clear opportunities for politicians to play on ethnic differences. Establishing an independent, representative electoral commission led by

individuals with impeccable integrity can circumscribe these ploys. As seen in Ghana and elsewhere, the effectiveness of a competent electoral commission can make an enormous difference in averting ethnic violence. Independent electoral commissions can also establish electoral rules that reward candidates for building cross-regional and intergroup coalitions—and indeed require them to do so. Ensuring that electoral jurisdictions do not coincide with ethnic boundaries is one component of such a strategy.

Ghana's experience with the CHRAJ provides further lessons for institutional responses to mitigate ethnic tension. The CHRAJ provided an accessible government entity responsible for documenting and reconciling ethnic grievances. Creating variants of the CHRAJ in other African countries would thus be a point of first contact for minority groups who believe they have been aggrieved. Such a human rights commission would then be empowered to serve as an ombudsman for investigating and remedying intergroup conflicts at the local level. It would be granted access and convening authority to draw on the assets of all other government entities that may have a role in resolving the grievance. In this way, the human rights ombudsman would be an

official mechanism through which individuals and communities could proactively go to resolve intergroup differences. Given the nature of its work and the requirement to gain the trust and support of local populations, representatives of the human rights ombudsman would need to be accessible at the local level in all potentially volatile regions of a country.

### Reinforcing Positive Social Norms.

Over the medium to long term, defusing the potency of ethnicity for political ends requires reorienting cultural norms. Social marketing campaigns that promote national unity, intergroup cooperation, and "strength through diversity" themes can help frame the ethnic narrative in a positive light, thereby making it more difficult for divisive politicians to play on differences to mobilize support. Such a communications strategy would be comple-

mented by a country-wide, community-level outreach campaign implemented by civil society organizations that targets youth, reinforcing messages of “one country, one people,” tolerance for other groups, and nonviolent conflict resolution.

Targeting youth is particularly important for breaking intergenerational attitudes regarding ethnicity. Youth is the population group most easily mobilized to violence. A comprehensive and deliberate educational system designed to promote integration and coexistence with emphasis on civic lessons on citizenship and what it means to be a nation will foster this concept of a common people with a common destiny. A social marketing campaign also brings this unifying message directly to the people rather than relying on ethnic or political leaders (who may be benefiting from the perceived divisions). This campaign, paralleling the successful efforts of legendary Tanzanian leader Julius Nyerere, would simultaneously help build a common national identity (which so many African countries still lack) while taking the ethnicity card off the table for political actors.

Complementing efforts to shift cultural and political norms surrounding identity, sanctions need to be created and applied to those actors who continue to attempt to exploit ethnic differences toward divisive ends. Two groups are critical here: the media and politicians. Penalties would take the form of a national law criminalizing the incitement of ethnic differences by political actors and public officials. These laws then need to be enforced. An independent body, whether the electoral commission or a human rights council along the lines of Ghana’s CHRAJ, would be given responsibility for investigating charges of ethnic incitement—and the authority to assess penalties including fines and bans from holding public office. The symbolism generated from a few highly publicized cases would go far toward shifting these norms.

The media also play a unique role in communicating information and impressions in society. As such, they have an indispensable function in a democracy to foster dialogue and debate. Unfortunately, in practice, it is common in Africa for certain media outlets to be controlled by politically influential individuals who are willing to whip up identity divisions to support their interests—greatly elevating the potential

for ethnic conflict. The media also have the potential to escalate a local conflict to the national level—raising the stakes for violence as well as complicating the task of resolution. Given the unique potential the media have for shaping social attitudes and mass mobilization, most societies accept that the media must meet certain standards for responsible behavior. These standards should include prohibitions against programming that incites ethnically based animosity. Again, independent monitoring bodies, possibly in collaboration with national media consortia, should be given the authority to quickly investigate and enact tough sanctions against outlets deemed to have violated these standards against hate mongering.

**Early Response.** A key lesson learned from experience in preventing and quelling ethnic tensions in Africa is the value of addressing these issues sooner rather than later. Tamping down these tensions is more

---

*as most ethnic violence occurs at a local level—along a faultline bordering neighboring communities—the value of a rapid response before other triggers are tripped is vital*

---

feasible—and less costly in social and financial terms—before intergroup divisions have been mobilized and violence ensues (which, in turn, sets off a new and more polarized cycle of grievance, fear, distrust, and retaliation). It also underscores the importance of government officials taking every group’s expressed struggle seriously (for example, claims of discrimination, denigration, or denial of rights) and responding immediately. This, of course, presupposes that the government is competent and willing to deal with these conflicts and is not a party to the grievance in the first place. The creation of a human rights ombudsman that is seen as an impartial actor that will document and investigate ethnically based claims provides the dual benefit of a mechanism that addresses these claims fairly and can help defuse tensions before they boil over. Belief that there is a systematic means by which one’s grievances can be fairly addressed reduces the likelihood that individuals will feel the need to take corrective measures into their own hands.

Finally, preventing ethnic tensions from escalating out of control requires a rapid response capacity within the security sector when intergroup clashes occur. These police and military forces must be trained to respond in an even-handed yet assertive manner that builds confidence in the state’s capacity to intervene constructively. As most ethnic violence occurs at a local level—along a faultline bordering neighboring communities—the value of a rapid response before other triggers are tripped is vital. The local nature of these ethnic triggers also points to the need for broad-based training of the security forces. Every local police jurisdiction needs to have the awareness and capacity to respond in such ethnically charged contexts, as they will likely be the first responders. They, in turn, can be backed up by military forces (most likely from a provincial level) that will, in most cases, have better transport, communications, and firepower to bring a situation under control. However, the initial response by the police is critical in shaping the trajectory of that confrontation.

There is a human tendency to reinforce intergroup differences. Civilized societies learn ways to prevent these impulses from becoming polarized and turning violent. Understanding the political roots of many of Africa’s ethnic clashes can help us focus and redirect our conflict prevention efforts—and in the process enhance the effectiveness of our growing toolkit of corrective measures. **JFQ**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Bruce Gilley, “Against the Concept of Ethnic Conflict,” *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 6 (2004).

<sup>2</sup> Edward E. Azar and Robert F. Haddad, “Lebanon: An Anomalous Conflict?” *Third World Quarterly* 8, no. 4 (1986).

<sup>3</sup> Philip Ostien, “Jonah Jang and the Jasawa: Ethno-Religious Conflict in Jos, Nigeria,” Muslim-Christian Relations in Africa, Sharia in Africa Research Project, August 2009, available at <[www.sharia-in-africa.net/media/publications/ethno-religious-conflict-in-Jos-Nigeria/Ostien\\_Jos.pdf](http://www.sharia-in-africa.net/media/publications/ethno-religious-conflict-in-Jos-Nigeria/Ostien_Jos.pdf)>.

<sup>4</sup> Walter Oyugi, “Politicized Ethnic Conflict in Kenya: A Periodic Phenomenon,” Government of Kenya, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Nicholas Sambanis, “Preventing violent civil conflict: The scope and limits of government action,” 2002, background paper for the *World Development Report 2003: Dynamic Development in a Sustainable World* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2003).





Mapuche resistance march in Santiago, Chile

Flickr (Guido Antileza)

# Ethnic Politics, Defense, and Security in “Latin” America

By MARTIN EDWIN ANDERSEN

In “Latin” America, a new dynamism has emerged in the relationship between indigenous communities, representing at least 40 million people, and national governments, particularly in terms of Indian peoples’ belated incorporation into the region’s putative democracies as full citizens and their integration. From the time of the Spanish Conquest, this relationship has largely been through the military due to the physical and cultural remoteness of state capital cities vis-à-vis the Native American communities and the lack of a real state presence, except for the military and other security forces (although historically the axis of contact with non-Indian society also included the Catholic Church and more recently the school system). Commonly used as a conduit for integrating indigenous peoples (already facing both the promise and threat of social mobility and consumerism in urban areas) into the national polity, the relationship with the armed forces came at a high cost to the Indians. Military lead-

---

Martin Edwin Andersen is an Assistant Professor of National Security Affairs in the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies at the National Defense University. His most recent book is *Peoples of the Earth: Ethnonationalism, Democracy, and the Indigenous Challenge in “Latin” America* (Lexington Books, 2010).

ership, like the rest of the nations' elites, have with few exceptions been white or mestizo with an urban orientation or outlook, so the integration was one-way: Indians were incorporated into the military, forced or persuaded to give up their cultures and language, and become mestizo citizens.

Currently, this dynamic is in rapid flux, as Native American demands for long-overdue political representation, as well as the active nation-state protection of their cultures and access to land and other resources, surge to visible prominence. Those in power—looking across great divides of culture, language, geography, and history—feel menaced by an indigenous assertiveness that in the best of circumstances seeks to destabilize the traditional status quo. As the deepening of democracy has included indigenous communities more actively asserting their demands, the traditional roles of the military vis-à-vis the indigenous communities have to be carefully reexamined, as the outcome has far-reaching implications for positive resolution of issues ranging from internal security and national defense to regional hegemony.

## Background

Contemporary indigenous challenges reach into the heart of democracy itself. A visible few manifest themselves as allies of populist leaders who threaten democratic institutions or who have admiration and support from extracontinental extremists, such as Iran and Islamist groups. In mid-2009, political scientists Mitchell Seligson and John Booth examined a year of polling in the region and found that, after Honduras and Haiti—the latter the hemisphere's perennial "sick man"—the next countries whose democratic political stability was threatened by the citizens' low perception of political legitimacy were Guatemala, Peru, and Ecuador. They pointed out that each, with large Indian populations, was characterized by "low consolidation of democratic norms and high dissatisfaction with government performance and institutions." The polling data revealed that each had "larger proportions of antidemocratic, institutionally disloyal, and economic performance-frustrated populations." Having large populations of disgruntled citizens may encourage elites to risk antidemocratic adventures, Seligson and Booth noted, which is the most common challenge to democratic rule. Only historically coup-prone Bolivia, the

country with the largest percentage of indigenous populations in the Americas, seemed likely to escape such a fate, in part for reasons explained below.

In a book published 4 years earlier, *Armed Actors: Organised Violence and State Failure in Latin America*, University of Utrecht professors Dirk Kruijt and Kees Kooning noted that the proliferation of "armed actors" in the region is due in part to ethnic tensions in various countries, particularly in the central Andean region of Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia.<sup>1</sup> It is in that context that the warnings of political scientists Joshua Goldstein and Jon Pevehouse become increasingly urgent; when conflicts take on an ethnic cast, they become harder to resolve "because they are not about 'who gets what' but about

---

*the ways state policies put force in the hands of security custodians include questions about the trustworthiness, steadfastness, and definitions of citizenship of those uniformed guardians*

---

'I don't like you.' . . . Almost all the means of leverage used in such conflicts are negative, and bargains are very hard to reach. So ethnic conflicts tend to drag on without resolution for generations."<sup>2</sup>

The ways state policies put force in the hands of security custodians are key to both democracy and security, and include questions about the trustworthiness, steadfastness, and definitions of citizenship of those uniformed guardians. Issues regarding ethnicity, armed forces, and police have erupted at times, particularly along the spine of the Andes, where Indians comprise either the majority or significant minorities in lands where their ancestors lived before the Spanish Conquest. At issue there and elsewhere is not only whether the national elites in charge of security and defense policies trust their indigenous countrymen enough to include them inside the governance circle, but also whether the indigenes trust their police and military to serve, protect, and defend their own interests. Current and pending clashes are more intractable because they are based not only on material interests, but also, as Goldstein and Pevehouse point out, on psychological and emotional factors.

For example, militant Chilean Mapuche Indian organizations have been placed on the U.S. Department of State's terrorism list, while that country's militarized, largely nonindigenous national police act as the point of the lance for state policies that allow non-Indian national and foreign corporations to develop on native peoples' ancestral lands. To some, the gathering confrontation appears to foreshadow the dire threats to the nation-state itself postulated a decade ago by Chilean military theorists. In October 2008, even before the latest round of violence and indigenous community organization, the president of the powerful Confederation of Production and Commerce (*Confederación de la Producción y el Comercio*) called on the government to employ a heavy hand in dealing with violence linked to the Mapuche question: "The acts of violence are not 'isolated incidents.' The citizenry has been witness to the level of complexity, organization, and increase in scale that has recently become worse. This is part of a long-term plan with ideological connotations of a terrorist kind."<sup>3</sup>

In Bolivia—a country that since independence has been synonymous with armed coups d'état, and where Indians have until recently been disenfranchised although they make up a solid majority—self-declared Marxist-Leninist and indigenous President Evo Morales has remodeled the armed forces (by all accounts successfully) under his control along the lines of his ethnic refoundation of the republic. Key to his appeal is his call for a new military-peasant pact, this time led not by a general or a fractious colonel, but rather by indigenous peoples themselves.

Meanwhile, Ecuador's left-wing populist President Rafael Correa, mindful of the overthrow of two of his predecessors by Indian-led unrest (in one instance in tandem with ambitious senior army officers), can be seen to constantly look over his shoulder to avoid their fate. As recently as October 2009, the government, reelected in a landslide, nonetheless had to backtrack after a national faceoff with protesting Ecuadorian indigenous groups. As anthropologist Brian Selmeski has noted, the overthrow of elected President Jamil Mahuad in 2000 by a military-indigenous coalition marked the debut of a new power combination on the turbulent Ecuadorian scene, as it was the first time the key factions of the armed forces—which for the preceding decade had jettisoned the promotion of *mestizaje*, or integration through acculturation, in favor of

# Clan, the State, and War

## Lessons from the Far North

By BARRY S. ZELLEN

Since the modern state first encroached upon their pristine and sparsely inhabited homeland 400 years ago, the Inuit of the Arctic have aspired to restore their Aboriginal rights and cultural traditions, and whenever possible, to reclaim components of their indigenous sovereignty. As the Inuit learned more about the systems and structures of governance that were exported from Europe and later the newly independent capitals of North America, they found new ways to reclaim many lost powers through innovative domestic diplomacy, negotiation, and various forms of political protest.

This contrasted elsewhere in the Americas, where the modern state collided more forcefully with the interests and sovereign aspirations of hundreds of indigenous empires, nations, and tribes from the late 15<sup>th</sup> century onward. The result was annihilatory warfare, genocide, forced migrations, and coercive assimilation policies—all aiming at the general extinguishment of indigenous identity. It was a brutal chapter in history that pioneered the art of ethnic cleansing but that resulted through its decisive results in domestic security and opened up an entire continent to American power. While a part of American history that evokes much guilt nowadays, our three centuries of Indian wars provided us with a useful testing ground for counterinsurgency, coalition warfare with tribal allies, balance-of-power diplomacy, and many an improvised admixture of hard, soft, and smart power. Who we are as a nation, and how we fight wars around the world, continues to be shaped by our experience tackling the many security challenges presented by America's first inhabitants and their spirited defense against our inevitable expansion.

In the Far North of our continent, the state collided with indigenous tribes much later in history, with economic contact, and later military interaction, starting in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. By the time the presence of a rapidly modernizing state began to be felt in the Far North, its methods for asserting political control began to mellow, with hard power shifting to soft power and treaty negotiation replacing conquest for the final integration of the last, virgin territories into the American and the Canadian polities.

In 1867, America purchased Alaska from Russia and with it Russia's assertion of sovereignty over Alaska's interior tribes, and because of its harsh climate and remote location, most Americans thought William Seward was foolish to have spent \$7 million on these frozen acres, dubbing the new territory "Seward's Ice Box" or "Seward's Folly." Great Britain, and later Canada, similarly bought their way to sovereign expansion, not by purchasing the land from a competing power but by entering into a series of numbered treaties, nation to nation, that brought the

western tribes into its expanding confederation. Thus, largely through negotiation between two unequal parties, tribe and state, the new territories of the Far North entered into southern control without, by and large, recourse to war—with exceptions including the Métis rebellion from 1871 through 1885, and the more limited armed uprising at Oka, Quebec, in 1990. Because the political integration of the Far North was achieved largely without war, the preferred tools for reconciling the interests of tribe and state would remain predominantly nonviolent, modeled on the treaty process, with negotiation helping to bring some balance to the many other asymmetries—such as economic and military power—that separated the indigenous tribes from the modern states laying sovereign claim to the North.

While the expansion of the modern state into the North did not require frontier warfare as experienced elsewhere in America's expansion, modern warfare did have a profound sociopolitical impact on the relationship between Alaska Natives and the modern state. This was most dramatically illustrated in June 1942 when Japan bombed Dutch Harbor and invaded the islands of Attu and Kiska in the Western Aleutians. With Japan's forcible resettlement of the surviving native Aleuts from Attu to Hokkaido for the remainder of the war, Alaska Natives quickly recognized that they too faced grave danger, and the crucible of war would help to tighten the bond between Alaska's indigenous peoples and the rapidly expanding modern state, which mobilized for war by building new air-strips, surging manpower, and cutting the Alaska Highway across 1,400 miles of northern wilderness in 1942.

While this rapid mobilization would create many stresses and strains on the long-isolated Native population, including the painful odyssey of the remaining Aleut population as it was relocated outside the war zone to camps in Alaska's southeast, the wartime experience would also help bring the two peoples closer together—most evident in the formation of the Alaska Eskimo Scouts in 1942, the famed "Tundra Army" organized by Major Marvin "Muktuk" Marston, which would become the Alaska Territorial Guard, with thousands of volunteers representing over 100 Aleut, Athabaskan, Inupiaq, Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian, Yupik, and non-Native communities. In the high North Atlantic, the dual impact of the Battle of the Atlantic, and America's defense of Greenland and maritime Canada, would similarly bring modern state power into remote and traditional Inuit territories in Labrador, Baffin Island, and Greenland. Later, during the Cold War, the massive DEW (Distant Early Warning) Line Project and integration of the isolated Arctic coast into North America's air defense would have a similarly transformative impact, extending modern state power deeper into the homeland of the Canadian Inuit.

Native participation in the defense of Alaska would provide a powerful unifying force, stimulating the movement for Native rights that culminated in the historic 1971 passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, the pioneering land treaty transferring 44 million acres of land title and \$1 billion in compensation to Alaska Natives, a model embraced and later enhanced

---

Barry S. Zellen is Research Director of the Arctic Security Project at the Naval Postgraduate School. He is the author of *Arctic Doom, Arctic Boom: The Geopolitics of Climate Change in the Arctic* (Praeger, 2009), and *On Thin Ice: The Inuit, the State, and the Challenge of Arctic Sovereignty* (Lexington Books, 2009).



as Inuit land claims were negotiated across the entire North American Arctic, with Inuit gaining title to nearly one-tenth of their traditional land base, and new co-management structures enabling a joint approach to managing natural resources, land access, and economic development.

A new spirit of reconciliation between tribe and state thus emerged in the Far North, recognizing two fundamental truths on the ground: that the modern state had arrived, and with it a preponderance of power; but also that the indigenous tribes had long been there, with their own traditions and cultures—and that these cultures still mattered. This reconciliation has resulted in new governing institutions to moderate this “clash of civilizations” along the last frontier, as new forms of local, regional, territorial, and even tribal governance have taken root—some using a public governance model while others embracing a more traditional tribal model. At the municipal level of government, there is the North Slope Borough in Alaska, a vast municipality that sustains itself through property taxation of the Prudhoe Bay oil facilities, a borough larger in size than the state of Massachusetts but governing a population of just 6,000—with hundreds of millions in petro-dollars to build world-class infrastructure and provide modern government services. At the territorial level, there is the vast Nunavut Territory, governing one-fifth of Canada’s landmass, home to just 30,000 people, almost all Inuit, scattered across 28 villages in an area larger than Europe—and a source of much of Canada’s future natural resource wealth and strategic waterways. And at the tribal level, there is the new Inuit government of Nunatsiavut in northern Labrador, which has a unique Inuit constitution that governs its 2,000 Inuit residents living in six villages in a traditional manner, rejecting a public governance model in favor of one that is more distinctively tribal in nature.

As shown by these innovations in northern governance, indigenous culture has become increasingly recognized not as a fault line of conflict but as a new and viable boundary line for political institutions, providing a foundation for political stability. The experience in the Far North suggests that with prudence and innovation, and a willingness to redraw political boundaries to better reflect the underlying ethnocultural topology, it is possible to create stable frontier regions free of war, and with effective mechanisms for mediating tribe-state disputes before they explode into violent conflicts.

“multicultural nationalism”—and important indigenous groups allied themselves so openly and collaborated so closely.<sup>4</sup> Today, even Correa must rein in political bravura while wondering if past is prologue.

And in Peru, contending national forces conduct their arm wrestling in the arena of ethnic politics, a development that has already claimed the lives of scores of poor Indians and underresourced police, two communities that share a common status-gap with their country’s ruling elite. The case of Peru is significantly unlike that found in neighboring Bolivia and Ecuador, as the armed forces in the former embarked on a herculean but ultimately unsuccessful attempt to radically restructure the country so as to prevent a violent revolution from below. There, military

---

*in Peru, contending national forces conduct their arm wrestling in the arena of ethnic politics, a development that has already claimed the lives of scores of poor Indians and underresourced police*

---

government and movements, not by elected democracy, have historically ushered in measurable progress for indigenous peoples, although with varying degrees of respect for their indigeneity.

In Central America, the entire eastern region of Nicaragua has been declared an independent state by a majority of that country’s indigenous peoples, many veterans of the anti-Sandinista struggles of the 1980s, with a call for a new ethnic armed force.

### **Ethnicities and Militaries**

Ethnicity and the roles played by military and security forces thus have obtained a relevance that belies the paucity of contemporary scholarship on them. Three decades ago, before the fall of the Berlin Wall and the resurgence of nationalities in the former Soviet empire, before the emergence of Native Americans as a political force in a broad swath of Latin American countries, and before the latticework of extra-hemispheric ethnic revivals ranging from Greenland to western China, a small but important body of academic literature emerged on the intersection between ethnicity and the military in the developing world. U.S. political scientist Cynthia Enloe

Library and Archives Canada (O.B. Buell)



**Indigenous Métis men taken prisoner during rebellion against Canada, 1885**

**U.S. troops land on Attu after Japanese invasion, May 1943**



Emendorf Air Force Base History Office

produced two of the most indispensable of these pioneering studies, *Ethnic Soldiers: State Security in Divided Societies* and *Police, Military, Ethnicity: Foundations of State Power*. Together, these works defined and highlighted the importance of military policy in determining ethnic frontiers and their prominence in governance of unstable multi-ethnic societies.

Enloe examined the extent to which military and security policies represented elite manipulation of ethnicity. She assayed the impact of ethnic strategies that formed part of the personnel policies of national security establishments, including how they were organized to ensure both ethnic group allegiance and national service. She looked at the historical and contemporary outcomes that influence class, religion, and ethnicity and their effect on the loyalty of the military and the police. Showing the extent to which ethnic identification served to limit national security planning, Enloe presented a working model for analysis about the role played by the military in the operation of the security core of the state vis-à-vis ethnic issues. The differentiation between the army on one hand, and the navy and air force on the other, formed part of her analysis, as well as the role played by the police and the impact that the relative gap in uniformed status suffered by law enforcement had on the calculations of security establishments.

Enloe offered what she called an "ethnic state security map" of elite expectations of various ethnic groups as well as their perceived political dependability. This, she found,

offered the possibility to predict political postures vis-à-vis the state, "often an ideal design matching expectations to strategic formulas." She observed that mapping is the mental calculation by which nation-state elites find an optimal way of securing the state by means of interethnic architecture. The most important were:

- ethnic groups residing along sensitive frontiers
- ethnic groups fulfilling strategic economic roles (exploited or privileged)
- ethnic groups with sufficient political resources to challenge the existing political order
- ethnic groups with ties to potential foreign state rivals
- ethnic groups with the greatest access to the state structure as currently organized.

In Latin America, a number of nation-states meet two or more of these criteria with regard to indigenous peoples, with the combinations suggesting in several cases the potential for geostrategic hecatomb. None, however, except for Bolivia, are represented in the last category.<sup>5</sup>

The relevance of the work of Enloe and a few more recent researchers such as the late political scientist Donna Lee Van Cott earlier in her career, historian Cecilia Méndez G., and Selmeski take on new brio as conventional elite assumptions about the armed forces' archetypal national and integrative functions are challenged by facts on the ground south of the Rio Grande. In

Latin America, the military still plays an integral role in institutionally defending the state against external foes while assuring its domination over the national population. And as Méndez points out, the armed forces not only play a political role, but also have an impact on daily life that helps define national character. In many countries in the region, the military and the police remain a primary point of contact between rural indigenous peoples and the nation-state, with their interface extending to questions of education and social mobility.

As ethnic unrest continues to build in underperforming democratic states, key issues are the social composition and elite direction of the legal forces arrayed to repress unrest among those groups where such

---

*in Latin America, the military still plays an integral role in institutionally defending the state against external foes while assuring its domination over the national population*

---

instability is most likely. In addition, against shibboleths about the military as a catalyst for modernization and the creation of primary group identities around the nation-state, this emerging literature may fill in the blanks about the enduring appeal and relevance of ethnicity. Perceptions of a nation-state elite, and who they are, can be key in determining military-ethnic relations. As Enloe shows, the

Museo de la Memoria



Residents of Villa el Salvador, Peru, point to suspected member of Sendero Luminoso, September 1992

Republic of Ecuador (Santiago Armas)



Presidents Hugo Chávez of Venezuela and Rafael Correa of Ecuador greet crowds in Quito



equation includes questions such as whether a particular group can be trusted based on their position on a continuum of ethnic/national identification, whether consensus or political fragmentation is a better political strategy to pursue, and the degree to which the state can forgo additional military manpower from conscription of “unreliable” ethnic groups.<sup>6</sup>

In countries where ethnicity is not necessarily determinative alone in creating security challenges within the ranks of the military and the police, it nevertheless arises when paired with the social, economic, and political fault lines that modernization and market economies pose to communal societies. Perhaps for that reason, when violence erupts, as it did in the Peruvian Amazon in June 2009 over the national government’s failure to consult native peoples before allotting vast tracts of their ancestral homeland to national and foreign companies, the non-Indian elite in Lima needed to question whether it could count on the loyalty of the military, the lower ranks of which were made up largely of people from the rebellious region, to loyally restore order.<sup>7</sup> In the month before the violence, police officials repeatedly warned of the increasing numbers of Indians pouring into the area, their reports including the amount and kinds of armaments the protestors were carrying and the fact that many were veterans of Peru’s brief border war with Ecuador in 1995.<sup>8</sup> The Peruvian General Intelligence Directorate reportedly informed the national law enforcement ministry 2 weeks earlier that police efforts to remove the roadblocks thrown up by protestors would cause a violent confrontation. Later, government officials publicly contradicted each other as to whether they had advanced knowledge of their indigenous adversaries, while privately suggesting the indigenous communities did have useful intelligence about the government’s own plans—by means of a network of lower ranking military and police officials sympathetic to the imprisoned former military officer Antauro Humala, spokesperson for an ultranationalist Indian ideology.<sup>9</sup>

The case of Peru, where more than 45 percent of the population is Indian and an additional 37 percent is mestizo, is particularly worthy of greater examination, in part because of the stark contrast between events there and those in neighboring Bolivia and Ecuador. Radical mestizo, or mixed-race, former military officers Antauro Humala and his brother Ollanta (the latter the winner of some

45 percent of the votes in a 2006 presidential contest) are the products of exclusive private schools. Although they lead two separate ultranationalist political parties, the ultimate aim of their ethnocacerist movement is to reunite “the three Inca republics, Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru,” while seeking not “a change of government, of people or of a face, but of the state”—in other words, the very foundation upon which Peru’s government rests. The manner in which these and other ethnocacerists engage in a nationalist historiography calls to mind the dictum of historian of nationalism Elie Kedourie—that “nationalists make use of the past in order to subvert the present.”<sup>10</sup>

USAPD (Maureen Taft-Morales)



**K'iche'maya women show inked fingers after voting in Guatemala**

In some ways reminiscent of the regime of left-wing nationalist General Juan Velasco Alvarado (1968–1975), ethnocacerism, as observed by Cecilia Méndez G., projected itself as:

*the flag carrier of Peruvian peasants and Indians and especially of the thousands of [military] reservists of overwhelmingly Andean origin who fought against Sendero Luminoso [Shining Path guerrillas], and in less proportion against Ecuador [during a 1995 border conflict], and who the State and the political parties seemed to have abandoned. . . . In effect, it was the first post-velasquista political movement that took an openly critical posture regarding anti-indigenous racism and neo-liberal policies, which*

*were in other parts of the continent already being questioned.*

Different from the example of Ecuador, Bolivia, and other countries where Indian activism emerged from civilian popular and union movements, “in Peru, the pro-indigenous movement that would have the greatest impact had military roots, bases and ideology.” That ethnocacerism appealed largely to low-ranking personnel with the military and police suggested not only the ethnic glass ceiling that is an unwritten rule in those institutions, but also the inability of Peru’s national defense and public safety institutions

to serve as a channel for the emergence of a Native American middle class.<sup>11</sup>

The case of Bolivia represents another, diametrically different example of the phenomenon offered by Enloe. There, amid great social tension, Morales appears able to count on the continued support of the military in what is still remembered as Latin America’s most coup-prone nation. By accepting indigenous peoples in their senior officer ranks, the military and state have helped themselves to be seen as more legitimate by the majority Native American population. Upon assuming the presidency, Morales—an important antagonist of the security forces from his time as the coca growers’ leader in the semitropical Chapare—worked hard to recreate the

military according to his own needs. The membership of the officer corps was drastically remodeled, with several classes of senior officers forced from their posts—particularly those Morales considered disloyal or critical of his international allies. At the same time, Morales created an atmosphere in which

patriotic holidays, national hymns, and flag ceremonies, and public monuments are dedicated to wars and military heroes sometimes with greater frequency than those that recall civilians. In calling for a fundamental refoundation of Bolivian society, Morales issued his own call for a new military-peasant pact,

*ethnocacerism's appeal largely to low-ranking personnel with the military and police suggested the inability of Peru's defense and safety institutions to serve as a channel for the emergence of a Native American middle class*

officers could, and were encouraged to, serve as peoples of indigenous origin.

Morales's efforts had effects extending beyond the officer ranks. As Selmeski has observed, the day after Morales visited the Presidential Guard's garrison for lunch, declaring himself "still 'a reserve soldier' despite holding the position of 'Captain General,' hundreds of Indian youth presented themselves voluntarily for service," in the process over-coming a "general disdain [*sic*] for conscription [that] is particularly true for Indians." Military service, Selmeski noted, can be viewed as a win-win situation, as it "provides opportunities for *indigenas* to accept or challenge the state-idea (and concomitant notions of nation and citizenship), and the Army to resist or accommodate the contentious process of indigenous self-identification, organization, and action." With an Indian commander in chief, it also offered the armed forces the opportunity to redefine (and redeem) its relationship to the country's chief executive. Morales, too, went further to win uniformed hearts and minds, adopting a "nationbuilding" model for the military promoted by his mentor, Venezuelan strongman Hugo Chavez, which involved the armed forces in development projects—road building and other infrastructure development, health care, and education—that were once the fiefdoms of civilian cabinet ministries. When the Constituent Assembly met in August 2006, 32 indigenous nations that had been previously trained by the armed forces paraded in front of the president at his request.<sup>12</sup>

Over time, Morales's actions suggested that he understood, in the words of Cecilia Méndez G., the continuing cardinal importance of the military in Latin American society—not only in terms of their much-remarked political impact, but also in daily life and socialization, where the pace of national identity itself is set by martial parades during

one that this time would be led by indigenous people and not uniformed populist *caudillos*.<sup>13</sup> Few are betting, in the short run at least, that he will not continue to be successful.

The potential for ethnic conflict in "Latin" America is likely to remain a significant security question in the region for generations, all the more so given the growing expression of indigenous demands through the prism of ethnic nationalism. Key to the successful resolution of these real and potential conflicts is the role played by the police and military—the latter in particular traditionally a potent collective symbol of nationalism.

The questions posed by Enloe three decades ago and only partially addressed in recent scholarship remain central to unraveling the Gordian knot of how to make democracy real for millions of people in Latin America still outside the arc of its benefits and who look to non-Western ideas for answers to issues such as land tenure, the administration of justice, and interethnic relations. Answers to these questions will also achieve the unfinished hemispheric business of decolonization—including that necessarily needing to be carried out within nation-state bureaucracies, particularly within its security and defense establishments. Only by doing so will a broad assurance be offered that the clock will not be turned back on the progress of indigenous peoples seeking to regain full citizenship in lands once ruled by their ancestors. **JFQ**

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Kees Kooning and Dirk Kruijt, eds., *Armed Actors: Organised Violence and State Failure in Latin America* (London: MacMillan, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *International Relations*, 9th ed. (New York: Pearson, Longman, 2009), 163, 174.

<sup>3</sup> Captain Paula Videla del Real, "El Conflicto Mapuche y su Impacto en la Seguridad Nacional," available at <[www.mapuche.info/fakta/cesim1999.html](http://www.mapuche.info/fakta/cesim1999.html)>; Ivan Fredes, "Empresarios piden al Gobierno aplicar 'mano dura' por los atentados mapuches en el sur," *El Mercurio* (Valparaíso and Santiago), October 22, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Brian R. Selmeski, "Multicultural Citizens, Monocultural Men: Indigeneity, Masculinity, and Conscription in Ecuador," Ph.D. diss., Syracuse University, 2007, 2–3.

<sup>5</sup> Cynthia H. Enloe, *Ethnic Soldiers* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980), 15, 17.

<sup>6</sup> Cecilia Méndez G., "Populismo militar y etnicidad en los Andes," *Iconos, Revista de Ciencias Sociales* No. 26, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (Flacso), Sede Quito, September 2006, 14.

<sup>7</sup> Author interview with Peruvian defense and security expert Luis Giacoma Macchiavello.

<sup>8</sup> Raúl Sohr, "Peru and the Law of the Jungle," *The Santiago Times*, June 18, 2009; Rocio Otoy, "Disturbios en la Amazonía revelan fractura social en Perú," *Efe Spanish News Agency*, June 6, 2009; Paola Ugaz, "Indígenas peruanos, en guardia contra Alan García," *Terra Magazine*, May 12, 2009, available at <[www.ar.terra.com/terramagazine/interna/0,,EI8867-OI3760404,00.html](http://www.ar.terra.com/terramagazine/interna/0,,EI8867-OI3760404,00.html)>; Kristina Aiello, "Peru's Cold War against Indigenous People," *Worldpress.org*, July 19, 2009; "Inteligencia para ciegos," *Instituto de Defensa Legal*, August 26, 2009, available at <[www.seguridadidil.org.pe/.../26.../inteligencia-para-ciegos.htm](http://www.seguridadidil.org.pe/.../26.../inteligencia-para-ciegos.htm)>.

<sup>9</sup> Sohr, "García's development plans trigger bloody clashes in Peru's Amazon," *Latin News .com Weekly Report*, June 11, 2009 (WR-09-23); Doris Aguirre, "¿Quién dio la orden de desalojar a indígenas sin prevenir represalias?" *La Republica .pe*, June 12, 2009, available at <[www.larepublica.pe/bagua-masacre/12/06/2009/quien-dio-la-orden-de-desalojar-indigenas-sin-prevenir-represalias](http://www.larepublica.pe/bagua-masacre/12/06/2009/quien-dio-la-orden-de-desalojar-indigenas-sin-prevenir-represalias)>; "Editorial: Renuncia, diálogo y pacificación nacional," *El Comercio.com.pe*, June 8, 2009, available at <[www.elcomercio.com.pe/imprensa/notas/renuncia-dialogo-pacificacion-nacional/20090608/297631](http://www.elcomercio.com.pe/imprensa/notas/renuncia-dialogo-pacificacion-nacional/20090608/297631)>. Information about the use of the Antauro Humala network to spy on the government was obtained in confidential interviews with the author.

<sup>10</sup> Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, 4th ed., expanded (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 70.

<sup>11</sup> Méndez G., "Populismo militar," 13–14; Manuel Piqueras Luna, "Etnicidad, Ejército y Policía en el Perú: Una aproximación," undated, available at <<http://blog.pucp.edu.pe/item/44822>>.

<sup>12</sup> Selmeski, 10; Douglas Farah, "Into the Abyss: Bolivia under Evo Morales and the MAS," *International Assessment and Strategy Center*, June 17, 2009, 33–36, available at <[www.strategycenter.net/docLib/20090618\\_IASCIIntoTheAbyss061709.pdf](http://www.strategycenter.net/docLib/20090618_IASCIIntoTheAbyss061709.pdf)>; Pablo Stefanoni, "Arranca en Bolivia la Constituyente," *Página/12* (Argentina), August 6, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Méndez G., "Populismo militar," 14.



## Suggested Additional Reading

- Andersen, Martin Edwin. "Failing States, Ungoverned Spaces and the Indigenous Challenge in Latin America." *Security and Defense Studies Review* 6, no. 2, August 2006.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. Ed. London: Verso, 1991.
- Austin, Raymond D. *Navajo Courts and Navajo Common Law: A Tradition of Tribal Self-Governance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2009.
- Barriónuevo, Alexei. "A Tribe in Brazil Struggles at the Intersection of Drugs and Cultures." *The New York Times*, December 6, 2008.
- Booth, John A., and Mitchell A. Seligson. *The Legitimacy Puzzle in Latin America: Democracy and Political Support in Eight Nations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Ching, Erik, and Virginia Tilley. "Indians, the Military and the Rebellion of 1932 in El Salvador." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 30, no. 1, February 1998.
- Chiriboga, Lucia. "Milicia e indios: una relación contradictoria. Taller visual." *Iconos, Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, no. 26, September 2006.
- Connor, Walker. *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Dreiszigler, N.F., ed. *Ethnic Armies: Poly-ethnic Armed Forces from the Time of the Hapsburgs to the Age of Superpowers*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1990.
- Enloe, Cynthia H. *Ethnic Soldiers*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980.
- . *Police, Military, and Ethnicity*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1980.
- Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. "Explaining Interethnic Cooperation." *American Political Science Review*, 1996.
- Ferguson, Yale H. "Ethnicity, Nationalism and Politics Great and Small." *Mershon International Studies Review* 38, 1994.
- Horowitz, Donald L. "Patterns of Ethnic Separation." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23, no. 2, April 1981.
- . *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.
- Hutchinson, John. "Warfare, Remembrance and National Identity." In *Nationalism and Ethnosymbolism: History, Culture, and Ethnicity in the Formation of Nations*, edited by Athena S. Leoussi and Steven Grosby. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007.
- Jevec, Adam. "Semper Fidelis, Code Talkers." *Prologue Magazine* 33, no. 4, Winter 2001.
- Kaufmann, Chaim. "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars." *International Security* 20, no. 4, Spring 1996.
- Kempe, Frederick, and Clifford Krauss. "Flawed Approach: U.S. Policy on Indians in Nicaragua Damages Anti-Sandinista Effort." *The Wall Street Journal*, March 2, 1987.
- Krujtit, Dirk, and Kees Kooning. *Armed Actors*. London: MacMillan, 2005.
- Leoussi, Athena S., and Steven Grosby, eds. *Nationalism and Ethnosymbolism: History, Culture, and Ethnicity in the Formation of Nations*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007.
- Marks, Thomas. "Making Revolution with Shining Path." In David Scott Palmer, ed., *Shining Path of Peru*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994.
- Méndez G., Cecilia. "Populismo militar y etnicidad en los Andes." *Iconos, Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, no. 26, September 2006.
- . "Incas Si, Indios No: Notes on Peruvian Creole Nationalism and Its Contemporary Crisis." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 28, no. 1, February 1996.
- Migdal, Joel S., Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue, eds. *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third Worlds*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Millett, Richard L., Jennifer S. Holmes, and Orlando J. Perez, eds. *Latin American Democracy: Emerging Reality or Endangered Species?* New York: Routledge, 2009.
- Millones Mariñez, Iván. "El Mariscal Cáceres: ¿un héroe militar o popular? Reflexiones sobre un héroe patrio peruano." *Iconos, Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, no. 26, September 2006.
- Muller, Jerry Z. "Muller Replies," in "Is Ethnic Conflict Inevitable: Parting Ways Over Nationalism and Separatism." *Foreign Affairs*, July–August 2008.
- . "Us and Them: The Enduring Power of Ethnic Nationalism." *Foreign Affairs*, March–April 2008.
- Olmos, Harold. "South American Indians Seek New Nation." *The Associated Press*, February 7, 2006.
- Posen, Barry R. "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict." *Survival* 35, no. 1, 1993.
- Rabasa, Angel, et al. *Ungoverned Territories: Understanding and Reducing Terrorism Risks*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2007.
- Roeder, Philip G. *Where Nation-States Come From*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.
- Saez Paiva, Javier. "La crítica mapuche a la frontera chileno-argentina: antesala a una crisis binacional?" Tesis Magister en Seguridad y Defensa, Academia Nacional de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos de Chile, Fall 2008.
- Selmeski, Brian R. "Multicultural Citizens, Monocultural Men: Indigeneity, Masculinity, and Conscription in Ecuador." Ph.D. dissertation, Syracuse University, 2007.
- Starn, Orin. "To Revolt against the Revolution: War and Resistance in Peru's Andes." *Cultural Anthropology* 10, no. 4, November 1995.
- Zellen, Barry Scott. *On Thin Ice: The Inuit, the State, and the Challenge of Arctic Sovereignty*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009.
- . *Breaking the Ice: From Land Claims to Tribal Sovereignty in the Arctic*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008.



Marine and Sri Lankan UN peacekeeper provide security at food distribution point in Carrefour, Haiti

U.S. Navy (Spike Call)

# Regional Threats

By CURTIS A. WARD

## SECURITY CAPACITY IMPERATIVES IN THE CARIBBEAN

**T**here is often a tendency to ignore festering problems until they evolve into historic or catastrophic events. Geopolitical and national interests determine whether many such problems become priority issues for proactive responses by policymakers in the United States and other developed countries. Delaying appropriate action, or ignoring these issues for too long, often results in unmanageable crises, significant loss of lives, and waste of vast amounts of financial assets. Such resources might otherwise be deployed to enhance economic and social development to ameliorate the conditions that give rise to such situations. As is often the case, however, U.S. willingness to respond, or to lead a global

response, to festering problems frequently is linked to its own national interests and security imperatives.

Unfortunately, but for the lack of political will and timely application of appropriate resources, many crises or potential crises in regions and subregions of the world could be prevented. While the dangers for some subregions have reached crisis levels, others are not yet irreversible or are yet to reach catastrophic stages. Hence, proactive measures can avert further deterioration that could create future security dangers. Negative security trends now evident in the Caribbean, for instance, fueled primarily by transnational crimes, can be reversed. The security challenges that flow from sophisticated and well-financed transna-

tional criminal enterprises must be addressed as a matter of priority in affected countries and regions. The imperative is for security capacity-building geared to meeting such challenges. Proactively addressing the lack of security capacity to counter international crimes will prevent those conditions from developing into cataclysmic security events.

The Caribbean region—in particular, the English-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) island states and the Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>—is different in many ways from other regions facing serious security threats.

---

**Ambassador (Ret.) Curtis A. Ward is Adjunct Professor in the Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University.**



Though significant in terms of potential risks to the United States, the conditions that give rise to threats posed by deficiencies in the security capacity of the Caribbean region have not reached irreversible or catastrophic stages. Moreover, the region's nexus to the United States uniquely positions it in the proximate U.S. geopolitical and strategic sphere. Thus, there is an incentive, if not an urgency, for the United States to proactively pursue security capacity-building measures in the Caribbean region. This article frames this relationship in the context of U.S. national security interests and Caribbean security and development imperatives.

### The Third Border

Because the Caribbean has been recognized since April 2001 as America's "third border,"<sup>2</sup> the U.S.-proposed Third Border Initiative (TBI) was intended originally as a U.S.-led partnership with its Caribbean neighbors that would facilitate and strengthen those nations' institutional capacities to deal with social and economic problems; to combat transnational crime, particularly illegal drug trafficking and illicit arms trade; and to promote regional security. In the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, the TBI vision was broadened to include enhancement of the region's capacity for U.S.-Caribbean cooperation in dealing with potential terrorist threats.

A joint statement issued by the governments of the United States, the CARICOM states, and the Dominican Republic emphasized the issue of security in U.S.-Caribbean relations. The statement was quite specific in this regard:

*We are further bound by a determination to protect our region from terrorists and criminals who would destroy our way of life and by a belief that terrorist acts, such as the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, represent a serious threat to international peace and our hemispheric security and require our governments to continue our efforts to prevent, combat, and eliminate terrorism.*

*We recognize our interdependence and the importance of close cooperation to combat new and emerging transnational threats that endanger the very fabric of our societies. By virtue of their small size and geographic configuration and lack of technical and financial resources, Caribbean States are particularly vulnerable and susceptible to these risks and*

*threats, especially those posed by illicit trafficking in persons, drugs, and firearms, terrorism, and other transnational crimes.*<sup>3</sup>

More than 6 years after this declaration, the problems of security in the Caribbean have increased considerably, and the threats have become more complex and therefore require far more superior responses. Caribbean states remain "vulnerable and susceptible" to the same risks identified at the 2004 Americas Summit in Monterrey, Mexico. They still lack "technical and financial resources," and the risks associated with the region still exist despite significant efforts by

to the United States in the same way it was 6 years ago in Monterrey.

The expectations that followed the Monterrey pronouncement have not been met. Except for its support for drug interdiction in the Caribbean, the United States has not kept pace with the security and development imperatives of the region. During this period, there has been little U.S. assistance to prevent the trafficking in illegal arms (automatic weapons and other small arms) to the Caribbean. By failing to staunch its own flow of guns, the United States itself has not matched the level of cooperation it has demanded of Caribbean countries in dealing

U.S. Navy (Ed Emry)



Sailors and Coastguardsmen transport bales of cocaine seized from go-fast small boat on Caribbean Sea

*there is an incentive, if not an urgency, for the United States to proactively pursue security capacity-building measures in the Caribbean region*

a number of Caribbean countries to improve security infrastructure and security expertise. However, with limited resources and insufficient technical and financial support from the United States and other international partners, such as Canada and the European Union, the security situation in the Caribbean should continue to be a cause of great concern

with illegal drug trafficking through and from the region to the United States.

Furthermore, most of the security imperatives imposed on the region are direct results of bilateral pressure from the U.S. Government, including through requirements of legislation such as the Maritime Transportation Security Act to protect the homeland, the international supply chain, and particularly U.S. trade.<sup>4</sup> Added to U.S.-imposed requirements are new security standards and best practices developed in international forums to deal with the threat of international terrorism and maritime and aviation security, often at the urging and leadership of the United States in the post-9/11 era.



USNS *Lewis and Clark* transits Caribbean Sea at sunrise

### The Security-Development Nexus

While Caribbean states remain relatively safe destinations for American visitors, there are significant security problems that threaten the future political stability and fragile economies of these states. Highlighting these problems is not intended to create any form of hysteria or to raise the threat level on Caribbean travel but to ensure that negative trends in the region are arrested before the problems become uncontrollable and irreversible. Preventative action, now rather than later, serves both the national security interests of the United States and the security and economic development interests of the region.

Caribbean security problems are not insurmountable, but they are beyond the technical and financial resource capacities of Caribbean countries to fix. Without significant input from the United States and other partner countries, the problems will only get worse and will pose significant threats to the U.S. homeland and the region in the future.

*Caribbean security problems are not insurmountable, but they are beyond the technical and financial resource capacities of Caribbean countries to fix*

The countries of the English-speaking Caribbean, despite their fragile economies, begin with clear advantages over most countries in other regions and subregions, including Central and South America. The English-

speaking Caribbean countries have strong democratic underpinnings, adhere to the rule of law, and have in place well-defined, though significantly underresourced, institutional mechanisms.<sup>5</sup> These distinctions provide a platform for institutional and operational capacity-building and security enhancement.

The security problems, while varied from country to country, have some common threads. These include substantial gaps in border management and control capacities—in particular, customs administration and control, port facilities security, and maritime border control. There is significant lack of capacity to prevent contraband from entering the international supply chain and the domestic environment. This capacity gap considerably increases the threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their precursors entering the international supply chain from or transiting marginally secured port facilities destined for the United States. The wide gaps in the capacities of the island states to patrol and secure their territorial sea and coastlines increase the likelihood of terrorists and international criminals gaining access to U.S. commercial shipping and cruise ship assets.

The Caribbean region's vulnerability has been exacerbated by the severe economic hardships they have experienced as a result of the recent global recession. The devastating January 2010 earthquake in Haiti has added new challenges that must be factored into the region's security dilemma. However, even before this tragic event, with considerably reduced available resources, an overwhelming majority of the countries in the region could not afford the high cost of security-related

technology, of desperately needed security infrastructure development, and of training, equipping, and maintaining security personnel, and there is no prospect that these countries will be able to afford them any time in the near future.

*economic development of the region depends on the security architecture of the region, and security depends on each country's level of development and ability to afford it*

For Caribbean states, the nexus between security and development is obvious. Economic development of the region depends on the security architecture of the region, and security depends on each country's level of development and ability to afford it. Which comes first?

### U.S. Interests

Protecting the homeland also means protecting Caribbean island states. This charge should be seen not as U.S. aid but as an investment in U.S. national security. There should be no doubt in the minds of policy-makers that the United States has a national security interest in ensuring that its third border is secure, thereby reducing its vulnerability to possible threats from terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal migration, human trafficking, and the smuggling of contraband and of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear materials. Any security breach in the regional

supply chain could have dire implications for U.S. homeland security. Despite this possibility, U.S. policymakers have given negligible attention to Caribbean security capacity and have done little to stem the flow of illegal weapons into the region.

*U.S. policymakers have given negligible attention to Caribbean security capacity and have done little to stem the flow of illegal weapons into the region*

In addition to U.S. national security interests, which alone should be reason enough for a significant American response to the security capacity needs of the Caribbean region, there are also important economic interests that need to be protected. The most critical among these are:

■ The over 15,000,000 containers that are offloaded and transited through the region each year to the United States and elsewhere. The Caribbean is not only providing major containerized transshipment ports for U.S. exports and imports, but also sitting astride the shipping lanes from South America and providing through-passage for ships navigating the Panama Canal toward North America, Europe, and other northern destinations. As the volume of maritime traffic continues to increase each year, the Caribbean has become a soft target for transnational crime. Securing the supply chain from possible contamination is of great concern to both the United States and the Caribbean.

■ The millions of American citizens who travel on business and leisure to the Caribbean each year. Hundreds of U.S.-based cruise ships, each carrying thousands of U.S. citizens, berth at several Caribbean ports throughout the year. There are also thousands of flights of U.S. commercial aircraft to and from the region annually. Security standards vary from seaport

to seaport and many Caribbean countries, without the use of latest available technology, struggle to maintain a minimum level of security at their international airports and have marginal security in their seaports.

■ The billions of dollars of U.S. direct investment in the Caribbean in the tourism, mineral, and energy industries. The United States relies heavily on the region for minerals and energy supply, in particular bauxite/alumina, and oil and gas, with Trinidad and Tobago being the largest supplier to, and a most reliable source of natural gas for, the United States.

Drug traffickers have successfully evaded the security mechanisms in place, including the joint U.S.-Caribbean drug interdiction efforts in the past. They will continue to do so, unless significantly more resources are made available than the United States has provided so far and has earmarked for this purpose in the future.<sup>6</sup> A recent statement attributed to a Jamaican government official

**Jamaican defense forces board High Speed Vessel *Swift 2* to participate in subject matter exchanges at Port Antonio, Jamaica, during Southern Partnership Station 2010**

U.S. Navy (Kim Williams)





estimated that it would take in excess of \$500 million to put in place the security equipment and infrastructure needed in the Jamaican ports serving international shipping and cruise lines. While there was no indication as to how this figure was arrived at, inasmuch as Jamaica has one of the largest container ports in the region and hundreds of thousands of cruise passengers visit Jamaican ports each year, this amount could well be underestimated. When we add to this the infrastructure requirements of the other countries in the region, this figure is nowhere near what is required region-wide.

funds may be applied to the procurement of additional small patrol boats, this level of funding will do little to adequately address the security capacity deficiencies in the security infrastructure of the region. To address these deficiencies, the regional security architecture must be reevaluated, assessed, and modernized to meet current threats.

For example, an initial investment of \$60 million was made by the government of Jamaica in 2004 for “modern” X-ray and gamma-ray equipment.<sup>10</sup> That equipment is now outdated in light of the more efficient and advanced technology since developed.

protecting Jamaica’s ability to participate in international trade, particularly with its major trading partners—the United States, Canada, and Europe. He also noted that Jamaica’s trading relationships could be seriously jeopardized should the government lack the capacity to ensure that the shipping and trade sector was not used as a vehicle to carry out terrorist acts against another country. He pointed to the fact that “no port is immune from such negative and destructive forces as the international drug trade, the smuggling of small arms and contraband, including the movement of nuclear, radiological, chemical, biological and other deadly materials.”<sup>11</sup> Mr. Patterson’s observations reflected the past and present reality for all Caribbean states and the region as a whole.

It is imperative, therefore, that significantly more security-related expenditure is made in the medium to long term to create additional security layers and to keep updating and maintaining security equipment. The high cost of modern security-related technology is prohibitive for most Caribbean states and is a considerable financial burden for all. The security infrastructure requirements can only be met through significant U.S. technical and financial programs.

In general, Caribbean states recognize the security threat to their development prospects and the obvious deficiencies in their overall security infrastructures—national and regional. However, Caribbean states are constrained by lack of financial, human, and technological resources to put in place the requisite security measures. A 2007 World Bank/United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime joint report underscores the negative impact of crime and violence on development of Caribbean countries, due in part to a lack of adequate security, and noted that crime and violence present one of the paramount challenges to development in the Caribbean.



Secretary Gates meets with prime ministers and defense officials from Caribbean nations to discuss regional security cooperation under the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative

U.S. Air Force (Jerry Morrison)

The \$45 million budgeted in fiscal year (FY) 2010 by the United States for the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), which was announced by President Barack Obama during the Summit of the Americas in April 2009 in Trinidad and Tobago, and the additional \$70 million Secretary of Defense Robert Gates recently said would be sought in the FY11 budget for the CBSI, is a mere fraction of what is needed.<sup>7</sup> These financial commitments under the CBSI and the summit with Caribbean government and defense leaders, according to Secretary Gates, are strong signals that the United States is reengaging with the region after having begun to draw down its presence after 9/11.<sup>8</sup> However, this expenditure, like most of the funds spent by the U.S. Government in the past, will be applied mostly to fund operational exercises, such as maritime patrols in regional territorial waters in maritime drug interdiction programs, and to provide additional joint training and exercises.<sup>9</sup> Although some of these

From the outset, the equipment put in place some 6 years ago was incapable of screening most of the large volume of container traffic passing through the Kingston port. Much of the scanning capacity targeted outgoing container traffic. Hence, scanning of incoming container traffic for contraband and illegal firearms is only marginally effected. Furthermore, that expenditure was considered at the time to be a mere down payment on what was needed for security equipment and did not include the high costs of maintaining ongoing port facilities security and personnel training required under international standards established by the International Maritime Organization’s International Ship and Port Facilities Security Code and by U.S. legislation, such as the Maritime Transportation Security Act.

Then—Prime Minister Percival James Patterson of Jamaica, while commissioning the equipment at the Kingston Container Terminal, stated that by establishing proper security measures at the ports, the government was

*Caribbean states are constrained by lack of financial, human, and technological resources to put in place the requisite security measures*

The insecurity that the report refers to is directly linked to drug trafficking and illicit arms trade plaguing the region. Most important, the report stated emphatically that Caribbean states cannot solve the problems of crime



and security on their own because of the vast amount of technical and financial resources required. It concluded in part that CARICOM states require significant support from Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries to do so.<sup>12</sup> It is safe to conclude further that security capacity-building support must be holistic in its approach and comprehensive in its application recognizing its relationship to development.

As noted above, the Caribbean is astride the major shipping lanes from South America to North America and Europe. Though one of the Caribbean region's greatest assets, the region's geographic position and construct increase its vulnerability and pose even greater security challenges. Drug traffickers moving cocaine from South America—especially from Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia, the world's largest cocaine producers—have taken advantage of the ease of transit through the region and the porous, unprotected borders of the islands. Illicit arms trafficking and money laundering, which support the drug trade, have contributed significantly to increased crime and violence and raised the security risks and threat levels in a number of Caribbean societies.

These and other emerging security risks have increased pressure on a global scale for each country to meet new and constantly evolving international standards of security primarily associated with combating international terrorism and transnational crime. Traditional security measures no longer suffice, and greater efforts are needed to keep pace with shifting security threats. The new security standards in particular disproportionately affect small states in which small economic returns from security investments hardly justify the large expenditures. In the ever-changing global security environment, threats from increasingly sophisticated transnational organized crime and terrorism are forcing Caribbean countries to adjust their priorities. However, without the resources to do so, they fall behind constantly.

The problem cannot be ignored indefinitely or until a catastrophic event either occurs in the Caribbean, or is planned and initiated in the Caribbean and carried out on U.S. territory. There are a number of likely scenarios that should raise deep concern among U.S. policymakers. These include a bomb or WMD placed on a U.S.-bound vessel in the Caribbean timed to go off or to release deadly pathogens when the vessel reaches a U.S. port.

How the United States responds to Caribbean security threats and the deficiencies in current security capacities of countries in the region will determine the region's future prospects for economic growth and development, as well as ensuring democracy, good governance, and the rule of law. These are the underpinnings of stability and security in the region. It is a matter of U.S. national security to ensure and guarantee the security of its third border. **JFQ**

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The CARICOM member states are Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. (Montserrat is an associate member.)

<sup>2</sup> President George W. Bush, at the Third Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, Canada, in April 2001, designated the Caribbean as America's "third border."

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Joint Statement by the United States of America, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Dominican Republic on the Third Border Initiative," press statement, January 13, 2004, available at <[www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2004/28136.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2004/28136.htm)>.

<sup>4</sup> Maritime Transportation Security Act, Public Law 107-295, November 25, 2002, available at <[www.tsa.gov/assets/pdf/MTSA.pdf](http://www.tsa.gov/assets/pdf/MTSA.pdf)>.

<sup>5</sup> This applies to all of the English-speaking Caribbean countries and the Dominican Republic. Haiti has been an exception, and the January 2010 earthquake not only will set back the progress made there in recent years but also has the potential to increase the security threats throughout the region.

<sup>6</sup> President Obama requested \$45 million from Congress in 2009 as a "contribution towards a multiyear, multi-faceted Caribbean Basin Security Initiative." Announcement available at <[www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/05/123543.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/05/123543.htm)>.

<sup>7</sup> Joint press conference, Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates and Barbados Prime Minister David Thompson, available at <[www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=4608](http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=4608)>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> See "PM unveils new security system at port," *Jamaica Gleaner* (Internet Edition), March 3, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> "Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean," Joint Report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank, March 2007, available at <<http://web.worldbank.org/external/default/main?pagePK=146736&theSitePK=258554&contentMDK=21320843&noSURL=Y>>.



**NEW**  
from **NDU Press**

for the  
**Institute for National Strategic Studies**



### Strategic Forum 256

#### *Prioritizing Strategic Interests in South Asia*

Robert B. Oakley and T.X. Hammes contend that the focus on the war in Afghanistan has prevented the United States from developing a South Asia strategy rooted in the relative strategic importance of the nations in the region. India, a stable democracy enjoying rapid growth, clearly has the most potential as a strategic partner. Pakistan, as the home of al Qaeda leadership and over 60 nuclear weapons, is the greatest threat to regional stability and growth. Yet Afghanistan absorbs the vast majority of U.S. effort in the region. Thus, the United States needs to develop a genuine regional strategy. The authors argue that making the economic growth and social reform essential to the stability of Pakistan a higher priority than the conflict in Afghanistan would be a core requirement of such a strategy.

### Strategic Forum 255

#### *Africa's Irregular Security Threats: Challenges for U.S. Engagement*

The United States has a growing strategic interest in Africa at a time when the security landscape there is dominated by a wide range of irregular, nonstate threats. Andre Le Sage shows how these various threats create a vicious circle, whereby even more terrorists and criminals can operate. Engaging African states as reliable partners to confront irregular security challenges will thus require a complex, three-pronged strategy. First, there must be substantial, continent-wide investment in capacity-building in the security sectors of African countries. Second, until such African capabilities come online, the United States and other partners will need to deploy more of their own personnel to Africa. Third, further efforts are required to harden the political will of African leaders to actually deploy their maturing capabilities aggressively but within the rule of law.

# The Age of Irregular Warfare SO WHAT?

By SEBASTIAN L.V. GORKA

*[F]uture adversaries are more likely to pose irregular threats.*

—Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept 2.0, April 2010

As the new Joint Operating Concept for Irregular Warfare hits combatant commands and doctrine shops across the U.S. military, we find ourselves searching for new intellectual aids and policy tools that can provide certainty in an age that seems increasingly unpredictable and “irregular.” We look back longingly to an age in which the battlefield was understandable, in which we thought we knew the enemy and the methods and means at his disposal. Even in this ninth year of an epoch-defining conflict, which for most Americans began on September 11, 2001, fundamental questions remain unanswered. What is the nature of the enemy? Is it an organization, network, movement, or ideology? What are the long-term objectives of this enemy? Does it have a Clausewitzian center of gravity? Should we even use the term *enemy*, or should the vast resources that Washington dedicates to national security be spent instead on ameliorating the “upstream factors” behind violent extremism (to quote a phrase used by a close advisor to President Barack Obama)?<sup>1</sup>

*It is now time to recognize that a paradigm shift in war has undoubtedly occurred.*

—General Sir Rupert Smith

ISAF troops approach building where militant activity was suspected in Wardak Province, Afghanistan

U.S. Army (Jordan J. Huettl)

Dr. Sebastian L.v. Gorka is a Professor in the College of International Security Affairs at the National Defense University. He was a member of the group that assisted in the formulation of the new Joint Operating Concept for Irregular Warfare. With Dr. David Kilcullen, he recently coauthored “Who’s Winning the Battle for Narrative? Al-Qaida versus the United States and Its Allies,” in *Influence Warfare*, ed. James J.F. Forest (Praeger Security International, 2009).



## The American Context

If we turn to Sun Tzu to answer such fundamental questions, we must start with ourselves. We must understand who we are and what we represent before we can hope to identify what threatens us and our value system. The gross if superficial outline is clear. America is today the world's sole superpower. Yet despite its immense power advantage over other states, 9 years ago it suffered the deadliest nonconventional or irregular attack in modern history. As a result, it is now involved in two nontraditional conflicts, one in the Middle East and one in Central Asia (neither area having dominated the work of military planners during the decades of the Cold War). At the same time, America is focusing much of its remaining national security capacity on neutralizing the threat of terrorist attack against the homeland.

But who we are and, therefore, where we need to go are not so simple. Just as the Human Terrain Teams deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan are meant to set the stage for military operations and explain the human context in which our forces are to function, we must understand our own context—our own human terrain—beyond the most recent crisis and at a level of analysis that is deeper than that supplied by the mass media or talking heads.

Some would call this an exercise in having an appreciation for the strategic culture of the United States. That may be a useful approach, but given the events of the last 70 years, it would be more accurate to talk of having an appreciation of the evolution of U.S. strategic culture rather than depicting it as a static reality fixed in the post-9/11 environment.

As a result, in order to appreciate fully the difficulties we face in today's irregular context and to have a hope of overcoming them, we must see the larger picture and the trend lines that have shaped it, for how we think strategically is an aspect of who we are. After all, strategic culture influences how we approach threats, and it challenges and shapes our responses. World War II and the Cold War left us emphasizing firepower, technology, and nuclear deterrence. Then came the strategic reality of the 1990s, which lacked any similarity to the preceding 40-plus years and thus had a distinctly negative impact on our ability to think about what national security really meant in a post-Cold War world. Now we must honestly assess how the intelligence-gathering and forecasting habits of World War II and the Cold War have created systemic

obstacles to providing basic informational support to the types of missions we are now expected to execute.<sup>2</sup> While we have invented new capabilities, such as offensive unmanned aircraft system platforms and stealth technology, and while we have written new doctrine for current missions (for example, Field Manual 3-24, the latest counterinsurgency manual), neither of these facts proves that we have fundamentally reworked the entrenched culture and architecture of a U.S. national security establishment predicated on neutralizing nation-state threats.

## The Global Context

In addition to delving into the premises underpinning our strategic culture, we must ask similar fundamental questions about the context in which the rest of the world finds itself at the beginning of the third millennium. Without getting into the lucrative but unscientific black art of long-range projection, we must ask questions related to relative power, the role of ideology, and the influence of demographics on actors who in the past were not of concern to us, or who simply did not exist in an age of bipolar conventional standoff. Nation-state actors and non-nation-state actors alike are affected by new drivers of change.<sup>3</sup> Power can no longer be measured simply in terms of gross domestic product or tank regiments. As Ralph Peters eloquently pointed out over a decade ago, survival may have far more to do with a given community's desire and capacity

---

*survival may have far more to do with a given community's desire and capacity to absorb and manipulate large amounts of information than with classic metrics of power*

---

to absorb and manipulate large amounts of information than with classic metrics of power.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the vulnerability of a given state may be measured more in terms of its access to clean drinking water or the size of its male population under the age of 20 than by its proximity to malevolent neighbors.

## The Conceptual Context

Lastly, and perhaps most difficult of all, it is the duty of all senior officials involved in providing for national security to seriously and most candidly reassess core assumptions upon

which our existing systems of analysis and planning are based. We must evaluate how apt these central concepts still are and formulate new principles should they be found wanting. Beyond the foundational core values of the Nation, such as those enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, we must recognize that no concepts are immune to critique and reappraisal when it comes to securing the homeland. America's founding values are sacrosanct and immutable, yet we must be ever imaginative and flexible in how we realize and protect them. For example, should the "Wondrous Trinity" of Clausewitz be found wanting in an age of globally dispersed nonstate actors and cyberwarriors, it must be discarded—or at least significantly reworked if it is to have utility in an age of proliferating nonstate actors, the likes of which the Prussian theorist could never have imagined.

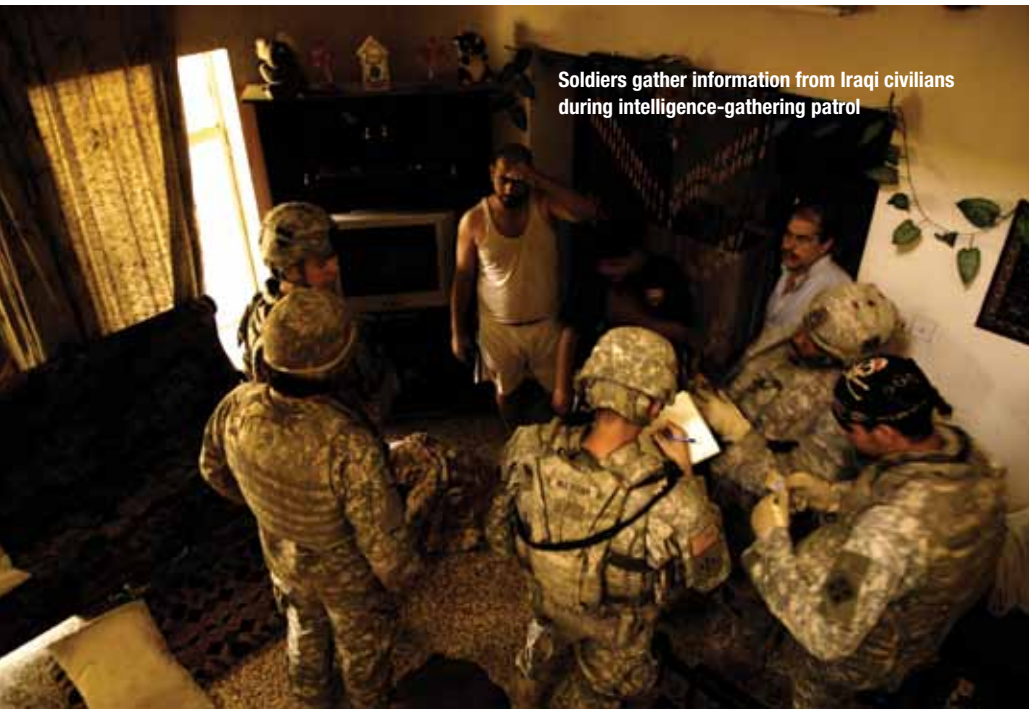
## The Context of Classical War Theory

With regard to this last point, we would be well served by engaging in an even more sweeping survey of our current context to include century-long trends. The blogosphere, professional military education journals, and

Army engineer and firefighter view damage at Pentagon caused by terrorist attack on 9/11







Soldiers gather information from Iraqi civilians during intelligence-gathering patrol

U.S. Air Force (Manuel L. Martinez)

President Obama speaks at memorial ceremony for Servicemembers killed during shooting rampage at Fort Hood



DoD (Cherie Cullen)

civilian publications provide ample reading on the core issues of how irregular war differs from conventional warfare. Nevertheless, we should take our quest seriously and in a way that steps beyond the theoretical navel-gazing of purely semantic debates. When Clausewitz gave us his immortal dictum on war as the continuation of politics, he was writing in a specific historical and socioeconomic context.

No matter how useful his analysis may seem, it cannot be divorced from the age in which it was born, an age when conventional war dominated strategic thought.

Clausewitz's *On War* must be understood as one man's forceful attempt to impose meaning on the clash of national arms. More specifically, it must be appreciated as an act of intellectual pilgrimage by an officer seeking to

explain the destruction of his military culture by an upstart foe successfully using the radical approach of *levée en masse* to decimate its professional enemy. That is why in his Wondrous Trinity, Clausewitz makes rational government ends the driver behind the actions of his skillful commander, who harnesses the passion and hatred of his troops (the population).

Clearly, the (Westphalian) nation-state construct informs everything Clausewitz wishes to achieve. We are therefore fully justified in reassessing his model in an age that sees violence applied most often in non-Westphalian ways—by nonstate actors. Similarly, context also applies to the other great strategist, Sun Tzu, who is also a victim of his age. Why else the emphasis on victory without combat being the ultimate goal? Unless we see Sun Tzu as a product of the Warring States Period before China was united, we cannot understand that his writings were driven not by the desire to destroy the enemy but to co-opt the political entities that would become the building blocks of a new empire.

Sun Tzu's context was the drive for unity in the China of the Warring States. Clausewitz's was the Napoleonic revolution in warfare and a young Westphalian system. As such, *On War* was crucial to understanding the Westphalian period. However, although much can be said of the post-9/11 age, Westphalian is not what springs to mind. As Martin van Creveld noted in a recent speech at the National Defense University, "What [Clausewitz] never imagined was a world in which many, perhaps even most, belligerents consist of nonsovereign, non-territorial organizations."<sup>5</sup>

Hence, we can ask some obvious but new questions and ascertain whether the old models apply. When discussing actors who engage in irregular warfare against us, how Clausewitzian is the enemy's understanding of the purpose of war? For example, is al Qaeda, or even Iran, driven by the same functional approaches to the use of violence as we are?<sup>6</sup> *On War* may remain the key text about nation-on-nation conflict between actors operating on logical cost-benefit lines directly connected to obvious political gains. But how is such calculation factored into an understanding of the utility of violence when we are facing a religiously motivated foreign-fighter brigade in Iraq, a unit of the Quetta Shura in Afghanistan, or a suicide bomber on a commercial flight crossing the Atlantic?



Soldiers engage enemy in Badula Qulp, Afghanistan, during Operation *Moshtarak*

U.S. Air Force (Efren Lopez)

Clausewitz was right about the immutable nature of war,<sup>7</sup> but his Westphalian context drove his understanding of the role of *raison d'état* and the trinity of forces that the state both embodied and leveraged. Those forces still exist, but the new actors we face—whether they be the Taliban in Afghanistan or al Qaeda in Yemen—have mixed these ingredients in new ratios and combinations, wherein rational, policy-oriented cost-benefit analysis and justifications have been trumped or qualified by less dispassionate and more otherworldly influences.

The triangle of Government, People, and Army (or Commander), which respectively represent reason (or policy), passion, and skill, is less than useful for many of the irregular threat groups we are fighting today because they are not nation-states. Take, for example, al Qaeda. Since the loss of its Afghan base of operations, there is no specific government or

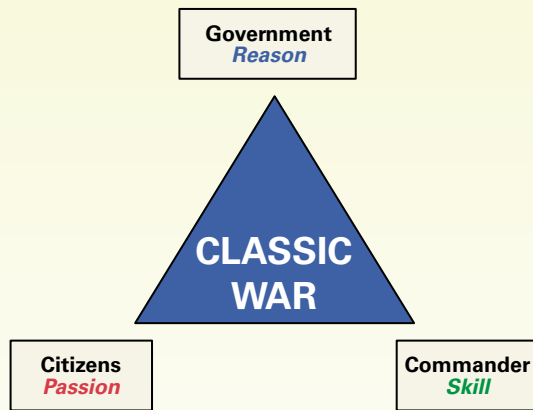
nation that is associated primarily with this foe. The violence of al Qaeda is not instrumental to an endstate akin to the policy goals of a “normal” government. Its ends are driven by the religiously fueled visions of ideologues, some alive today, but many, such as Sayyed Q’utb and Abdullah Azzam, deceased. None of these ideologues or irregular elites politically represented a nation in the Westphalian sense, making the triangle/trinity out of date.<sup>8</sup>

Simultaneously, the role of the military commander is not filled by a professional warrior subordinated to a political elite in the case of the irregular enemy. Osama bin Laden is a self-taught warrior, a mujahideen who never spent time at a war college or wore the uniform of a national army. Furthermore, his skill is not measured solely in the way that concerned Clausewitz, prowess on the battlefield. Rather, he must be understood in nonmilitary terms as an ideologue in his own

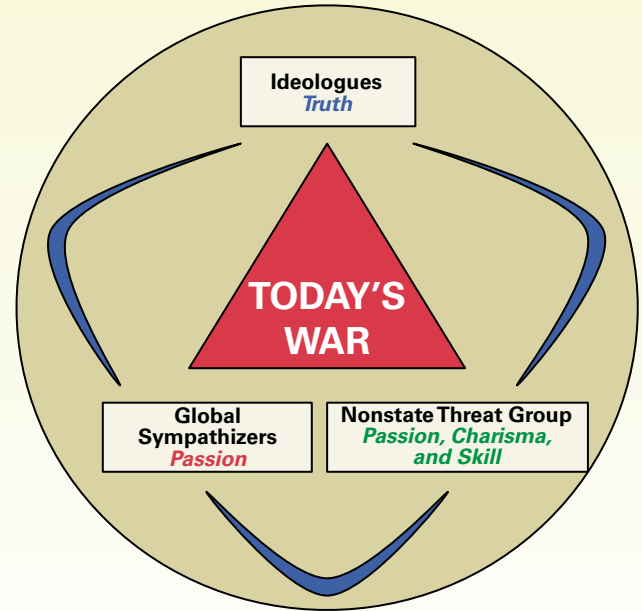
right, an information warrior who inspires by personal example. The commander of the Clausewitzian Trinity was judged by his ability to prevail despite the friction and fog of war. Bin Laden is measured less by his success on the battlefield—which has been minimal since 9/11—than by his authenticity as a “true believer.” He is an example of a holy warrior, prepared to die not for a political endstate but for a transcendental truth, judged by his capacity to inspire other violent nonstate actors.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, the passion- and hatred-driven third part of Clausewitz’s Trinity must be redefined. No longer is the enemy limited by the resource his national population represents. Bin Laden, like the Muslim Brotherhood, is not constrained by whether he can rally the citizens of one particular nation behind the cause of war or by their willingness to be drafted into a national army. The

## The Trinity of War Expanded



The Clausewitzian Trinity of War  
in the Conventional Context



The Trinity of War Expanded for the  
Current Irregular Warfare Age

enemy's recruiting pool is very un-Westphalian; it is global. Potential irregular warriors may be recruited from Algeria, Somalia, or Michigan, for al Qaeda's definition of population is not territorially bound but religiously defined by the idea of the *ummah*, or global Islamic community. And in this he is not alone. The anticapitalist extremists who so often violently trouble the representatives of the old Westphalian order, such as the Group of Eight, are also unrestricted in their mobilization by national borders.

Consequently, although reports of the death of the nation-state may have been greatly exaggerated, a definition of war that pertains only to nations indeed is dead. Clausewitz's Trinity still applies to state-on-state conventional war ("ideal war"), but it must be supplemented with another trinity that can depict the types of actors our troops are already fighting (see figure).

### A Wondrous Trinity for Today

Clausewitz's Trinity divided the world into three parts: the government, the governed, and the defenders of the state. Each reflected a different characteristic: rationale, passion, or skill. Although the triangular representation of the three implies equality, just as with the Christian Trinity, there is favoritism. As the Son sits on the right hand of the Father, and

the Spirit serves them both, it is clear from *On War* that the party Clausewitz privileges is the military, or more specifically, the artful commander who harnesses the population's passion and might so the nation may realize its goals.

Today's irregular enemy should be understood in a more egalitarian fashion. Just as the information and media worlds have been democratized, with Web sites and blogs turning consumers into producers and vice versa,<sup>10</sup> the trinity of the irregular enemy affords and invites an interchangeability of roles and functions. Leaders can be fighters, followers can become leaders, and both can interpret and feed into the enemy's understanding of why force is necessary and what ultimate purpose it serves. In other words, the components of the Clausewitzian Trinity have become utterly fluid and interchangeable.

As we have noted, this has profound implications for the resources the enemy can mobilize and with which he fights us. In Westphalian war, the enemy only has the people of his nation-state. For today's enemies, the limitations of borders and citizenship have vanished. We are faced by a Saudi master-terrorist as the leader of al Qaeda, but violence carried out in the name of the "truth" that he serves can be executed by Nigerian students on commercial airliners or U.S. Army majors of Palestinian descent. There are no limits as to

who can be recruited and deployed against us. The only requirement is that they subscribe to the religious ideology that is global jihad.<sup>11</sup>

A second deep ramification is that in the wars America fights today, national interest no longer defines the enemy's use of force. Rather, it is truth as defined not by the elite of a government, but by ancient religious texts or their interpretations by politically and transcendently motivated ideologues. Clausewitzian *raison d'état*, the objective of violence, is no longer bound by cold or technical definitions of national interest. If ultimate approval can be gained by being a suicide bomber or killing noncombatants in the name

---

*Mao broadened our understanding of warfare, but he also reinforced the Westphalian context, since the goal of the insurgent was always to become the nation-state*

---

of religious glory, then the rationale for violence must not be interpreted by U.S. national security elites as being subject to the limitations of a Westphalian framework of analysis. As a result, in today's irregular context, we can replace the rationale of the trinity with



the transcendental end that the true believers see themselves as serving.

Finally, in the new threat environment, the third actor of the Clausewitzian Trinity—the commander and his forces—is radically redefined. During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and then the Cold War, irregular warfare's practitioners could be easily understood as all having one very Westphalian goal for their violence. Although they were not representatives of nation-states, they sought to seize state power. This is how the master of this kind of warfare, Mao Tse-tung, revolutionized our understanding of the utility of force. No longer was it strategically used to serve an established government. Instead, by skillfully employing multifaceted campaigns on diverse lines of effort, unfolding in both tangible and intangible space, the insurgent could systematically build a counterstate that, when powerful enough, could challenge the incumbent in a conventional campaign, destroy it, and then fill the void by becoming the new state.<sup>12</sup> With People's War, Mao broadened our understanding of warfare, taking it beyond that which served the status quo elites. But he also reinforced the Westphalian context, since the goal of the insurgent was always to become the nation-state.

Today, in contrast, we face a foe who rejects the (Western) Westphalian model, an enemy who is not interested in a war of self-determination in the classic sense of post-colonial independence. Instead, he fights for worldwide religious supremacy, and this is why there is so much talk of al Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM) as representing the first global insurgency, and one we must counter with a global counterinsurgency.<sup>13</sup> His idea of self-determination is not tied to the nation-state, but to a global theocracy, the Caliphate, within which all shall be subject to the will of Allah, and not the will of the people.

It is likewise clear that the last element of Clausewitz's Trinity must be reassessed in the case of an irregular threat group that is even more ambitious than Maoist People's War would have us expect. We cannot represent AQAM as a nation-state military led by a commander serving the national interests of his government. This third part of the trinity is now populated by various types of actors. It consists of leaders such as bin Laden who say they serve no government, only God. It also consists of actors such as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a terrorist and insurgent leader who said he served God but also swore fealty

(*bay'at*) to bin Laden. It also refers to domestic enemies such as Mohammad Sidique Khan, the British terrorist who masterminded the 7/7 attacks. And lastly, it can also refer to the likes of Anwar al-Awlaki, the Yemen-based, American Muslim cleric who may not have had classic command and control of the Fort Hood shooter and Nigerian Christmas Day bomber, but far more importantly acted as inspiration and sanctioning authority for both Major Nidal Malik Hassan and failed suicide bomber Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab.

### So What?

Clausewitz is still valuable. His understanding of what war between states should look like has not changed with the arrival of a globally motivated and capable nonstate actor using irregular tactics and strategies. Nevertheless, his trinity cannot be applied directly to such enemies. The context has changed. The world can no longer be described as consisting of solely the governed, the governing, and the regular militaries that serve them. It has become more complex.

Fortunately, Clausewitz's other nontrinitarian insights into conflict still hold true. His image of war as two wrestlers is just as apt in



Soldier inspects area in Tuz, Iraq, where suicide car bomber struck, injuring civilians and police officers

U.S. Air Force (Suzanne M. Day)

## NDU PRESS Launches New Web site

describing Kennedy versus Khrushchev in 1962 as it is in representing General McChrystal versus the Quetta Shura today. This is the part of *On War* that we must reemphasize, while deemphasizing and reframing his Wondrous Trinity. With an enemy who sees himself as divinely justified, the expression of war as a *competition of wills* is more important than ever before.

In this regard, Clausewitz emphasized will over capabilities. This emphasis is doubly applicable today; it is the only way we can explain how untrained and pathetically equipped irregulars can still challenge the best fighting force in the world despite all its Predators and real-time intelligence. Understanding this element of Clausewitz's writings, Martin van Creveld warns that a "theory of war that only recognizes physical factors while ignoring moral and psychological ones is not worth the paper on which it is written."<sup>14</sup>

If we have the audacity to update the Prussian master's trinity, we should perhaps renew our faith in his famous dictum, even while recognizing how much we have misinterpreted it as of late. War may in fact serve politics as its extension in the Westphalian way of doing business, but we should also understand that war is politics, and politics is war. For too many years it is the violence—the kinetic effect—that has been our focus. Today, we face a foe who knows that war starts with ideas and depends on them, far more than it depends on weapons. **JFQ**

<sup>5</sup> Martin van Creveld, "An Obituary for Clausewitz," paper presented at the College of International Security Affairs conference, *Beyond the Horizon*, National Defense University, Washington, DC, 2009. Despite experiencing irregular warfare, Clausewitz only dedicates a few pages to the subject, and even then does so solely in the context of the weakened nation-state arming its population (*Volksbewaffnung*) when conventional forces are not enough.

<sup>6</sup> On the issue of expressive versus functional understandings of the purpose of war, see Christopher Coker, *Waging War without Warriors* (London: Lynne Rienner, 2002), and Michael Vlahos, *Fighting Identity: Sacred War and World Change* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> The master strategist Colin Gray puts it best: "We know with sad certainty that war has a healthy future. What we do not know with confidence are the forms that warfare will take."

<sup>8</sup> I agree with Michael Vlahos that we potentially make matters worse by using the image of a triangle to depict Clausewitz's Trinity since the word *trinity* implies much more than three-sided geometry. How to represent the threesome pictographically in a more exacting way is beyond the scope of this article, but a worthy task. The figure included herein is but a first attempt to revise the image for the current enemy.

<sup>9</sup> On the different ways in which jihadi enemies understand victory, see Jeffrey B. Cozzens, "Victory from the Prism of Jihadi Culture," *Joint Force Quarterly* 52 (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2009), 86–91. Also useful is Stephen Ulph, "Weak Points in the Ideology of Jihad," lecture delivered at the Westminster Institute, McLean, VA, December 10, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> I am grateful to David Kilcullen for succinctly explaining to me the revolution in the "information market" and how this affects such forms of irregular warfare as counterinsurgency.

<sup>11</sup> See Patrick Sookhdeo, *Global Jihad: The Future in the Face of Militant Islam* (Three Rivers, MI: Isaac Publishing, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Mao is notoriously misunderstood and wrongly attributed. For consideration of his position on the Clausewitzian notion of irregular warfare, see the various works of Thomas A. Marks, especially the seminal *Maoist People's War in Post-Vietnam Asia* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2007). A summary of Mao's five key questions in warfare and how they can be used to understand an irregular warfare threat can also be found in Thomas A. Marks, Sebastian L.v. Gorka, and Robert Sharp, "Beyond Population-Centric Warfare," *PRISM* 1, no. 3 (June 2010), 79–90.

<sup>13</sup> For a full examination of problems that the concept of global counterinsurgency brings with it, see Stephen Sloan and Sebastian L.v. Gorka, "Contextualizing Counterinsurgency," *The Journal of International Security Affairs* 16 (Spring 2009), 41–48.

<sup>14</sup> Van Creveld.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> John Brennan, Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, introduced this phrase in his speech to the Center for Strategic and International Studies: "A New Approach for Safeguarding Americans," August 6, 2009, available at <[http://csis.org/files/attachments/090806\\_brennan\\_transcript.pdf](http://csis.org/files/attachments/090806_brennan_transcript.pdf)>.

<sup>2</sup> The U.S. general officer responsible for intelligence in Afghanistan understands the need for radical changes to how we think about intelligence and how we collect and process it. See Michael T. Flynn, "Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan," available at <[www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/AfghanIntel\\_Flynn\\_Jan2010\\_code507\\_voices.pdf](http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/AfghanIntel_Flynn_Jan2010_code507_voices.pdf)>.

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed analysis of how the evolution of the state has influenced strategy over the centuries, see Phillip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History* (New York: Knopf, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> Ralph Peters, "The New Strategic Trinity," *Parameters* (Winter 1998), 73–79.

The new NDU Press Web site makes accessing your favorite publications easier than ever. New publications and blog posts are added daily so that readers can stay up to date on general activities and join in the discussion on topics of interest.

Visit NDU Press today to check it out:  
**[ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu)**

Visit the NDU Press Web site  
for more information on publications  
at **[ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu)**





Fall of Berlin Wall in 1989 signaled end of Cold War and decline of communism

DOD (F. Lee Cockran)

# Reorienting Grand Strategy

## The Promise of Single-equilibrium Defense Planning

By TIMOTHY J. JUNIO and JONATHAN PROTZ

**S**ince the end of the Cold War, the U.S. defense community has focused its futures analysis on a “range of possible outcomes” approach. Planners assume that social behavior, such as that of states in the international system or individuals in markets, is so complex that it defies point prediction. The best one can hope for, goes this mindset, is for a creative mind to envision scenarios that might come to pass, and then to prepare capabilities and strategies to meet challenges in those notional worlds. This approach to planning neglects two key and undeniable facts. First, at a specified level of granularity, there will be only one outcome of social interactions under study—a single equilibrium—just as there will be only one state of reality 5 minutes, 5 hours, and 5 years from now. Understanding which equilibrium will result is an informational, not a logical, research problem. Second, the United States has enormous potential to affect and effect changes in its favor—that is, to drive social systems, such as the international system, toward the particular equilibrium that U.S. policymakers desire.

---

Timothy J. Junio is a Doctoral Candidate in Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania and an Adjunct Researcher with the RAND Corporation. He previously worked for the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Intelligence Community. Dr. Jonathan Protz is Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science at Duke University. He has served as a Consultant to the Office of the Secretary of Defense and was an American Association for the Advancement of Science Defense Policy Fellow.

The traditional view remains correct—for now—regarding the lofty challenge of point prediction for most kinds of social systems. The persuasiveness of this perspective is eroding, however, due to radical improvements in the ability of the United States to acquire and analyze information and the potential for these improvements to make single-equilibrium strategy a preferred

*the United States has enormous potential to drive social systems, such as the international system, toward the particular equilibrium that U.S. policymakers desire*

approach. Thinking in terms of the range of possible outcomes distracts planners from efforts to achieve a particular outcome. By focusing on maintaining the stability of one ideal equilibrium—what one may call the lost art of grand strategy—defense planners would improve the probability that their desired equilibrium is attained. Such

exogenous shocks and possible interactions in the development of its strategy. Holding material capabilities equal, the deepest thinking actor's desired equilibrium is the one most likely to be attained.

In this article, we advocate regrounding U.S. defense planning in single-equilibrium terms. Given the current tenor of political debate in Washington, this approach to strategy may sound novel. In fact, it is a return to the grand strategy tradition of the United States during World War II. At that time, senior U.S. leaders chose policies to shape the Western political system such that the United States would emerge at its apex after the war. Applying this kind of planning process to today's challenges involves focusing on overarching objectives for the international system while continuing the process of alternative futures planning.

Our framework reconceptualizes scenario-based analysis as a means to return a social system to a desired path in the face of exogenous shocks. The United States could thus create a "funneling effect" on the future of the international system or subsystems of interest; bringing its enormous material

to single-equilibrium strategy is not only desirable, but also is a *necessity* given advances in technology. In particular, persistent surveillance, large-scale digital data retention, and advanced algorithms offer state actors enormous potential to better understand and, ominously, manipulate the behavior of social systems. We argue that applying these technologies to national security policy will become a competitive process between states during the coming decades, a claim that has an amoral descriptive component—the possibilities created by these new technologies—and strong normative implications regarding the changing relationship between states and their constituent populations.

### One World or Many?

The national security community is plagued by a tension: should planners attempt to predict the most probable state of social systems of interest, or focus instead on the range of possible outcomes? Each approach has relative advantages and disadvantages. Point prediction of social systems allows national security policymakers to allocate their limited time to a particular contingency. Examples abound, but for the sake of illustration consider the potential for revolution in countries of interest to the United States. Political scientists and the Intelligence Community alike have found it extremely difficult to gauge with precision when and where social revolutions are likely to occur. However, attempting to quantify the probability of revolutions and thus rank-order states at risk of political disturbances has strong intuitive appeal for those on the National Security Council or in the Department of State, who would be responsible for dealing with regional crises. An alternative approach—planning scenarios—has an advantage of covering a large range of possible outcomes in the social system of interest, and thus has a high chance of offering analysis of the actual outcome that results. This could mean thinking in terms of what kinds of governments might come to power following a revolution in a country of interest—during the Cold War, this would clearly have been a planning mechanism for a state's fall to communism, while at present the United States may be concerned more about nationalist or theocratic regimes.

The difference in outlook afforded by each approach is significant. Those who prefer the scenarios-based approach argue that the historical record of social scientists



During World War II, President Roosevelt pursued grand strategy that would benefit postwar United States

Library of Congress (U.S. Signal Corps)

a reconceptualization of futures analysis focuses not on attempting to predict the future, but on treating alternative futures as the consequences of exogenous shocks to a single-equilibrium trajectory. The "deepest thinking" of strategic actors is the one that has accounted for the greatest number of such

capabilities to bear, U.S. shaping efforts may constrain the choices of adversaries and thus reduce the number of possible outcomes. Preparing for exogenous shocks, therefore, may occur in a narrower range and with the intent of returning a system to the preferred equilibrium. Additionally, we argue that the return



seeking to predict social behavior is ridden with false judgments. At the top of the list is the general failure of U.S. policymakers to predict the demise of the Soviet Union; those favoring scenario analysis would note that the Soviet Union's collapse was *anticipated* while not *predicted*. The process of anticipating consequential political outcomes and planning for them would, it is argued, better prepare policymakers for future decisions than would dedicating analytic resources to trying to pinpoint exact equilibria. Those favoring point prediction, on the other hand, note that delivering a list of future contingencies that are treated as probabilistically equal is not particularly useful to a policymaker working 18-hour days in the Pentagon or at Foggy Bottom. That person would never have the time or adequate knowledge to conceive of and plan for every possible contingency.

Those who focus on the inability of researchers—or governments—to effectively model social systems tend to note three kinds of limits: observational (data may only be collected on a small part of a system at a time because, otherwise, the sensory, computational, and retention requirements exceed the researcher's capacity); cognitive (even if sensors hypothetically could capture large parts of systemic interactions, researchers would be unable to understand the nature of the interactions); and psychological (modeling *social* behavior is constantly plagued by humans' annoying tendency to break with expectations of what the "correct" actions are per a utility function). The number of factors affecting the outcome in even the smallest social system is deemed so numerous, and makes possible such a large number of combinations, that overcoming these three obstacles to even *describe* a social system is pronounced a practical impossibility.

We offer the perspective that these analytic approaches may be combined in a grand strategy framework. Those focused on point prediction of social systems are correct to note that, in fact, there will be one outcome of current processes of social interaction. The extreme of this position was once stated by mathematician Pierre-Simon Laplace. He proposed a thought experiment of a hypothetical God-like entity who, if able to know the position and velocity of every particle in the universe, could predict the entire future. This thought experiment captures the difference between informational and logical hindrances to point prediction

in social systems: if sufficient data could be obtained and analyzed, a precise outcome could be determined at a reasonable level of granularity. The level of granularity refers to a model's level of abstraction in space and time; since space and time are infinitely divisible, researchers must determine the level at which to gauge whether or not a system of interest is in a stable equilibrium. For example, in terms of the international system, one may think of the distribution of power or states' interests as one level of granularity, and one year as the unit of time. In a smaller-scale social system, such as analyzing a particular state, the level of granularity would be much finer. One may, for instance, look at the preferences of clusters of individuals (for example, ethnic groups) in week-long periods. The long-term objective of social modeling on any system of interest would be to incrementally improve the model's granularity.

One might say this approach is about taking the assumptions out of economic analysis. If an information collection and retention system were sufficiently effective as to identify an individual's preferences, then why bother using a deductive approach such as utility functions? Those on the opposite end of the scenario planning spectrum, however, would rush to point out the aforementioned limitations of identifying even the current processes of social interaction, much less determining the result of those processes a year into the future. The relevant question dividing these approaches, then, is about what advances in data gathering and analysis are plausible regarding social system modeling.

### Technology and Predicting Social Behavior

The emergence of several new technologies has placed mankind on the precipice of major breakthroughs in the ability to overcome observational, cognitive, and psychological limitations to predictive modeling of social systems. Critics consistently point out that despite the increasing availability of new information technologies, researchers have not gotten much closer to achieving social prediction. The core flaw in these types of criticisms is a failure of imagination. With an unlimited time frame, incremental improvements in technology will allow researchers to capture greater amounts of social behavior until a point is reached at which prediction is possible with a reasonable degree of confidence. Many decades may pass before social

system prediction is possible on a large scale, but we argue that actors with the long view in mind may gain first-mover advantages by beginning to develop technologies and policy processes to support single-equilibrium strategy in the present.

Consider, for instance, a monitoring system that observes, records, and analyzes the behavior of individuals in a pedestrian plaza sized a hundred yards square. Such a system could use cameras, hard drives, and an algorithm to study an aspect of the social system, such as the average amount of time a person spends sitting. The value of such a system could be, in its initial stages, understanding traffic flow for purposes of public safety. The first instantiation of the system could have one sensory input, one means of data retention, and one processing mechanism (the algorithm differentiating between the background environment and the individuals moving within it). Such a system, skeptics of social modeling might say, would do little more than a city employee sitting on a bench in that pedestrian plaza with a clipboard.

One may imagine, however, incremental improvements in the system over long periods of time that have an aggregate effect of creating a powerful surveillance tool. The algorithm may be modified to identify objects other than human beings—for instance, an unattended piece of luggage. Further software modifications could include identifying a specific individual of interest with gait or facial recognition. Another incremental improvement, in the memory capacity of the system,

---

*the ability to automatically identify long-duration, repeated visits by the same person outside the White House or a U.S. Embassy would be of great interest*

---

could allow for tracking the frequency of an individual's visits to the area. While this kind of monitoring system may be of limited usefulness at a dog park, the ability to automatically identify long-duration, repeated visits by the same person outside the White House or a U.S. Embassy in a high-threat country overseas would be of great interest.

The listed examples all refer to the *scope* of the system's monitoring capabilities. One

may liken this to increasing the number of variables in an equation; the system seeks to describe more of the social behavior within a given environment. All of the listed incremental improvements are well within the range of existing technology. An example of an improvement in the scope of the described system would be the ability to monitor individual preferences, such as for marketing purposes. For instance, an advanced algorithm could tag individuals in a commercial environment, such as a shopping mall, and develop models of consumer behavior by studying patterns of which stores individuals frequent. A further incremental improvement could be to remotely estimate the age of an individual (a quality related to gait and facial appearance) to add another level of complexity to the model. Yet another incremental improvement to such a monitoring system could include changes in sensory inputs; for instance, in a system designed to study consumer behavior, one would be interested in credit transactions. Incremental improvements in the availability of data, such as tracking sales statistics for those stores, would give the owner of the monitoring system a unique appreciation for the overall behavior of the shopping mall—which stores are most visited and by whom, and which have the highest rates of sales per shopper. More importantly, such a system would allow for the development of an inductive model of consumer preferences in a manner dramatically different from standard approaches such as survey data. Indeed, why study a survey drawn from a sample when the entire population of interest may be monitored?

The other means by which incremental improvements may lead to revolutionary breakthroughs in social system modeling is in the *scale* of monitoring systems. Our example was first limited to a small pedestrian area of a hundred yards square. A system may incrementally increase in scale, say, by another 50 yards every year or so. Material constraints (for example, how many cameras the local government could afford to buy and the number of analysts to parse the data) may dictate the extent to which the scale of the system may be extended when continuing to apply existing technology.

New technology also offers the ability to expand the scale of social monitoring, however. Consider an incremental improvement in the resolution of the cameras covering the area; such an improvement would allow for coverage

over a wider area as well as make possible qualitative improvements within the system (for instance, the new data create a new demand on algorithms able to analyze it). Such a system, using currently available commercial technology, could provide surveillance of the public social behavior of an entire city. Extremely high resolution imagery, such as gigapixel photography, allows an observer to take a picture of an entire city skyline and zoom in on an individual office window or restaurant. The use of this level of resolution, particularly if combined with aerial assets (such as blimps, unmanned aerial vehicles, or simply putting the camera at points of high elevation throughout the city), allows for an extreme extension of the scale of the system.

These examples help to stimulate one's imagination of what is possible, and the analytic distinction of increasing the *scope* and *scale* of a monitoring system helps to generalize our perspective regarding long-run incremental improvements. One more way to organize thinking about technological improvements to social system modeling is to focus on the kinds of technologies themselves, thus providing an analytic target to those seeking to understand what incremental improvements may finally lead researchers to attain confident prediction. The most relevant technologies, as noted in the above example, are persistent surveillance, digital memory storage, and advanced algorithms. Advances in each of these three types of technology are the key to understanding the potential for a revolution in the observation and prediction of social systems.

*Persistent surveillance (PS) systems* are those designed to maintain a constant, watchful eye over a target (for example, an individual person or a physical space, such as a large urban area). Among the most important technologies enabling PS is high-resolution imagery, such as gigapixel photography that allows a surveillant to zoom in on specific objects of interest from within a very large viewing frame.

*Large-scale data retention* refers to the wide availability of massive amounts of inexpensive digital memory. Google, for instance, draws on this type of information technology (IT) to archive the Internet. Combining large-scale data retention with PS technology allows surveillants to archive enormous amounts of data regarding a target of interest. In the above example of an individual under a multisensory PS system, large-scale data

retention would allow surveillants to develop models of that individual's behavior.

*Algorithms* are the "rules" that tell a computer what computations to perform and how to perform them. While software algorithms have necessarily existed since the beginning of the IT revolution, recent advances create new potentials to automate tasks normally performed by humans. In the case of PS systems, software performs many critical functions, including:

- generating models of target behavior, ranging from those of an individual to patterns within groups
- spotting outliers from an established model of "normal" behavior
- identifying targets of interest, such as by recognizing a person by gait or face, noting the use of "red flag" spoken or written words, or warning of the presence of dangerous objects based on shape or material composition
- discriminating between targets
- coordinating many sensors within an integrated surveillance system.

Taking these technologies together, one may see how incremental improvements during the next several decades will lead to unprecedented levels of understanding of social behavior. As described in our notional scenario, the extension of sensors in a surveillance network would allow for a high degree of understanding of how a particular individual behaves or, more ambitiously, to understand general tendencies within a large group of people. This level of knowledge, provided development of algorithms proceeds apace with sensory expansion and data retention, may finally allow for near-real-time

---

*the extension of sensors in a surveillance network would allow for a high degree of understanding of how a particular individual behaves or, more ambitiously, understanding general tendencies within a large group*

---

prediction of social behavior. An important assumption underlying this analysis is that while individuals may have knowledge of the surveillance systems under discussion,



for most persons, deviation from norms of behavior to avoid surveillance will be excessively costly. For instance, as evidenced by tepid responses to the explosion of closed-circuit television monitoring, far more than a majority of a population is likely to ignore surveillance systems in public places. While personal privacy concerns may abound, once surveillance systems are in place, most citizens have few incentives to attempt to escape observation by the system.

### Implications

Once governments begin to achieve high levels of knowledge of social behaviors of interest, this knowledge may be used in combination with tools of national power to effect behavioral changes. Persistent surveillance systems are useful in helping governments understand what actions to take (learning the preferences of an individual or population of interest) and whom to take the actions against (knowing which and/or how many persons must be influenced to achieve a desired political effect). Traditionally, these tools of national influence have been military or economic. Increasingly, IT plays a role in the U.S. ability to shape desired outcomes. While the technologies described above portend revolutionary changes in the ability to *understand* foreign behavior, information networks also allow the United States to *influence* persons or populations around the globe. The most obvious examples of these communication technologies are various tools on the Internet (email, Voice over Internet Protocol) and cellular telephones. Governments may also influence foreign populations by punishing them via the content of information systems. The most prominent example is banking, which is almost completely digitized.

The development of precision weaponry is a useful analogue to nonviolent coercion of individuals over communication networks. During World War II, communications were indiscriminately directed at entire populations, such as with radio broadcasts and dropping leaflets from planes. Similarly, munitions were used against entire urban areas. In the following decades, however, “carpet bombing” gave way to the development of laser-guided, and later global positioning system (GPS)-guided, bombs. The increased precision of these weapons has resulted in the scaling down of their size; the military’s ideal is to avoid collateral damage by using the minimum amount of explosive.

Communication technology has followed a similar pattern whereby access to information networks allows for the precise targeting of an individual of interest from thousands of miles away. Whereas once a government may have focused on posting a Web page to influence an entire foreign population, now one may imagine a smaller “bomb” in the form of email directed to a country’s subpopulation of interest, or Web pages that display different content depending on the location of a user seeking to access it. More ambitiously, one may imagine in the near future a replacement of economic sanctions against an entire country—which may have unfortunate humanitarian side effects—with unilateral targeted freezes of individuals’ bank accounts.

One may consider these sorts of technological changes and their coercive potential from the perspective of game theory. There is no such thing as “perfect information,” although this assumption drives much of economic modeling. In the real world, the costs of acquiring and processing information, and cognitive biases and limitations, place some ceiling on the amount of data being incorporated into strategic decisions. The surveillance systems discussed here suggest a manner in which a strategic actor may begin to raise that ceiling.

Game theory allows for modeling decisions with imperfect or asymmetric information; this approach is fruitful for considering how advanced IT may affect the choices of strategists. Consider two strategic actors. Each seeks to understand the payoff structure of the other as precisely as possible. Discerning the rank-ordering of someone’s preferences is, in practice, often difficult—particularly since individuals generally do not sit around making decision trees and ranking their relative valuation of commodities or activities. By

observing an individual’s behavior, however, a researcher may begin to create a model “as if” that person’s preferences were known. The primary logic underlying this approach is similar to why we believe surveillance systems may work to achieve social prediction: deviating from preferred behavior for the sake of thwarting a surveillant is costly to an individual. One may think of this in terms of traditional explanations of collective action problems. A society may, in the aggregate, have an interest in deceiving a surveillant, such as its own government (under a dictatorship) or a foreign government (under a competitive vision of global information networks). For one person, however, the perceived payoff of rebellious behavior is imperceptible, while the cost—even if quite small—will be greater in nearly every circumstance.

The strategic actor with superior information may use that advantage to shape the decisionmaking context of the other actor, thereby driving the outcome of the game toward an equilibrium of the information-dominant actor’s choosing. Again, in the real world, the level of capability of each actor is likely to have a decisive effect in such circumstances—an actor may understand how to manipulate an adversary’s choice structure, but find himself unable to do so. From the perspective of policy, however, the United States has the material advantage to effect changes based on superior information. Such changes may be for improvements (for example, efficiency gains) in existing policy, or for the development of new policy in pursuit of the same objectives.

The argument here sounds largely academic, but in fact our principles are derived from historical interpretation. *Seeking an information advantage to make the most of the*



World Food Programme (Gerald Bourke)

**Humanitarian consequences of economic sanctions against countries might be prevented by information targeting of individuals**



**Airmen at Eielson Air Force Base use surveillance cameras and monitoring stations to maintain security**

U.S. Air Force (Eric T. Shuler)

material context has been a linchpin of grand strategy for centuries. A prominent example is U.S. policy to dissolve European empires following World War II. As described by Peter Clarke in his *The Last Thousand Days of the British Empire*, the United States hastened the collapse of the British Empire by withholding financial assistance needed to maintain control over British territorial holdings in India and the Middle East. This dilemma for the British, referred to as a “financial Dunkirk” by contemporaries, was one that the United States created years before it happened by locking the British into the Lend-Lease system. The case demonstrates a combination of U.S. resources (diplomatic and financial) in pursuit of a grand strategy objective (postwar U.S. predominance in the West) at the cost of British might. The United States thus drew on specific knowledge of British finances and the relationship between those finances and foreign policy interests to effect a change in British behavior.

One may begin to consider the potential for advanced surveillance systems to empower similar strategy designs in today’s international system. From the perspective of U.S. foreign policy, competition in surveillance technology suggests opportunities for the furtherance of U.S. objectives, and also threats to the United States. Tapping access to foreign information networks,

## Moving Forward

The examples demonstrate that the United States has an interest in developing integrated surveillance systems for offensive and defensive purposes in pursuit of a unified grand strategy framework. The offensive capabilities affirm an efficiency gain while pursuing a unified grand strategy; combining advanced behavioral modeling with the full range of U.S. policy levers suggests the ability to better achieve U.S. foreign policy objectives. The threat from others using similar approaches against the United States, however—particularly should another become the “deepest-thinking” actor by understanding U.S. preferences and incentive structures better than we understand those of our adversaries—*necessitates* drawing on new IT in pursuit of a single-equilibrium strategy.

We advocate, therefore, a reorientation of defense planning and the intelligence process supporting it. Rather than focus on the future of the international system as something that will happen to the United States, we suggest emphasizing how the United States shapes the future. This process focuses not on the many possible ways that interactions in the international system *may* unfold, but instead directs efforts toward achieving highly specific outcomes of the many interactions in world politics. As argued above, despite the promise of new IT, scenario analysis ought not be

the United States would bring its material resources to bear to execute its strategy. The third is perhaps the most important from the perspective of long-term strategy: *evaluation and refinement* refers to using the surveillance system to continue to gather and analyze data on the target of interest. This phase begs the question: “Do we know whether or not our strategy is working? If not, why not?” The strategists may then improve the surveillance system, such as by developing new or tweaking old sensors and algorithms, to constantly deploy incremental improvements that increase the scope (complexity) of social modeling. If the data flow is effective, the strategists may then understand whether or not the strategy itself is working well, and seek to refine the link between material capabilities and actions.

The introduction to this article expressed the idea of a “funneling effect” on political outcomes should the United States reorient toward a single-equilibrium strategy. We conclude by further expanding this concept. In its pursuit of a particular state of the international system or subsystems, the massive coercive authority of the United States may diminish the choices available to foreign powers and thus limit the possible futures that may come to pass. In our proposed approach, planners constantly engage in scenario analysis to consider how the trajectory of the system of interest may diverge, and how the United States may adjust its policies to return the system to a desired path. One may think of this approach as a series of “course corrections” while trying to navigate complex social “waters.” The better the United States understands its political “waters”—the output of persistent surveillance systems—the more granular it may make its “corrections”—influence operations via information networks or other tools of national power.

In sum, our ambitions are, first, to convince policymakers to get back into the game of setting explicit goals for social system outcomes; and, second, to demonstrate that the thoughtful use of IT may help the United States to achieve and preserve those desired outcomes by shaping the decisionmaking structures of adversaries and by averting crises that threaten a preferred equilibrium. The technologies empowering such a strategy process will continue to evolve, and to maximize the potential gains from revolutionary advances in IT—and minimize the gains of potential adversaries—the United States should begin planning for, and investing resources in, these breakthroughs. **JFQ**

---

*one could learn how, given a particular cultural context, to improve the prospects of citizens “buying in” to a new regime*

---

combined with long-range persistent surveillance, could yield unique intelligence collection systems that allow the United States to model general tendencies of population preferences in foreign countries. Such information could be useful in executing such tasks as promoting democratization (for example, one could learn how, given a particular cultural context, to improve the prospects of citizens “buying in” to a new regime) and punishing rogue states (for instance, better understanding how to target sanctions). On the other hand, one may view a parallel between the present U.S. position and that of the British at the end of World War II; massive U.S. debt, which continues to accumulate, puts foreign powers in a position to potentially manipulate U.S. preferences (and, consequently, behavior) in the long run.

discarded. Instead, scenario planning should be viewed as a critical component of perpetuating U.S. strategy. This is particularly the case as the foreseeable advancements in surveillance do not make information perfect, merely much better, with strong advantages for the strategic actor capable of “seeing” the most.

A framework for single-equilibrium strategy would consist of three primary phases: planning, implementation, and evaluation and refinement. The *planning* stage would be to identify the strategic goal, design information-gathering systems in pursuit of that goal, and use initial data collection to inform a plan to align material capabilities to attain the goal. It is during this phase that scenario planning is critical; strategists consider how, once implemented, the strategy may fail due to (or be rendered less effective by) perturbations in the social system. The *implementation* phase is self-explanatory;



# STABILIZATION OPERATIONS

## A Successful Strategy for Postconflict Management

By JAMES P. TERRY

Civilian agencies and the private contractors who execute their policies play a major role in stabilization and reconstruction operations in Iraq and Afghanistan alongside their military counterparts. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of Defense (DOD), and nongovernmental organization (NGO) initiatives being implemented in these theaters involve thousands of military personnel and civilian contractors supporting hundreds of projects designed to ensure these two nations not only survive but also grow in self-sufficiency.

The roadmap for the coordination of these initiatives must establish a sequencing of actions for progress within a range of functions. The activities involved must be designed to lead to the desired endstate for the assisted nations and must include the plans and direction for actions the nations themselves should embark upon. The *planning* process involves a security component as well as both economic and governance initiatives. Postconflict reconstruction and growth involve initiation and implementation phases. Key to successful execution of the *implementation* phase is the effort to build the indigenous military and police

forces to provide for the nation's own security. The *execution* phase is dominated by those activities and agencies that ensure the basic needs of the people are met and that prepare the people in Iraq and Afghanistan to fulfill those needs for themselves. The governance aspect is the most complex and encompasses the necessary activities to establish government institutions and an environment free from the threat of renewed conflict. This framework offers tremendous advantages in that the functions can be assigned to international agencies and NGOs to facilitate the distribution of responsibilities along each of the three lines of operation.

---

Colonel James P. Terry, USMC (Ret.), is Chairman of the Board of Veterans Appeals in the Department of Veterans Affairs. He previously served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and as Legal Counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

---

Iraqi grouts tile at market being built with help of U.S. Army PRT



U.S. Army (Shane Samuels)

## Postconflict Environment

The immediate postconflict environment in Iraq and Afghanistan provided important lessons concerning security, governance, and reconstruction realities. The primary concern after the cessation of open hostilities was security, as it must be in every conflict. If Iraq taught us anything, it was that in the aftermath of combatant operations, local security forces are likely to be unable, unavailable, or unwilling to address civilian lawlessness and violence. For this reason, U.S. and coalition forces must have clear orders and an effective plan to provide law enforcement in major population centers immediately after hostilities cease. Because this was not the case in Baghdad, street crime, looting, and general lawlessness were rampant. This failure greatly slowed the stabilization process in the end.

An important element of the need for immediate security is the concomitant requirement for a plan to retrain and equip local police and security forces. This plan must be given the highest priority and be properly staffed and funded. In Baghdad, this task initially fell to five members of the justice department and became a task impossible. In Afghanistan as well, neither effective train-

ing nor an appropriate pay scale to ensure sustainability of a security force received proper attention at first. In both countries, the institutions that backed the local police (Interior Ministry and Justice Ministry) were inadequate or completely absent. Law and order, the desired endstate when an effective security force is in place, can only succeed if the other elements of public safety, to include a judicial system with courts and prisons, are present and properly functioning.

The recognition that security, stabilization, and reconstruction are interdependent and must have integrated strategies is critical. Undertaking ambitious reconstruction goals was possible when security was assured in areas of both nations but was far less so when the security footprint was smaller and more tenuous. It is vital to examine the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) model currently being used in Afghanistan as an

---

*an important element of the need for immediate security is the concomitant requirement for a plan to retrain and equip local police and security forces*

---

effective approach for linking security and reconstruction.

The success of these interdependent elements largely depends on a funding stream that allows for a rapid dispersal of aid to local leaders and contractors, who are essential to success. Government officials and community leaders must be identified and relied upon for advice as to which local contractors are reliable and honest and have the ability to get things done. Planning before and during the combat phase must include the prepositioning of resources, both financial and physical, so communities and their leaders can be given a jumpstart when local governance is reestablished. The experience in Iraq has shown that the coordination of resources is key to successful implementation, and that failure to coordinate among agencies often results in overlapping efforts, which can hinder progress on this important front. For example, after the cessation of hostilities in Baghdad and outlying communities, the coalition forces leadership, USAID (through contractor Research Triangle Institute), and the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) were all engaged in reestablishing local governance without effective coordination or planning. This led

to identification of, and support for, different community leaders by organizations that should have been unified.

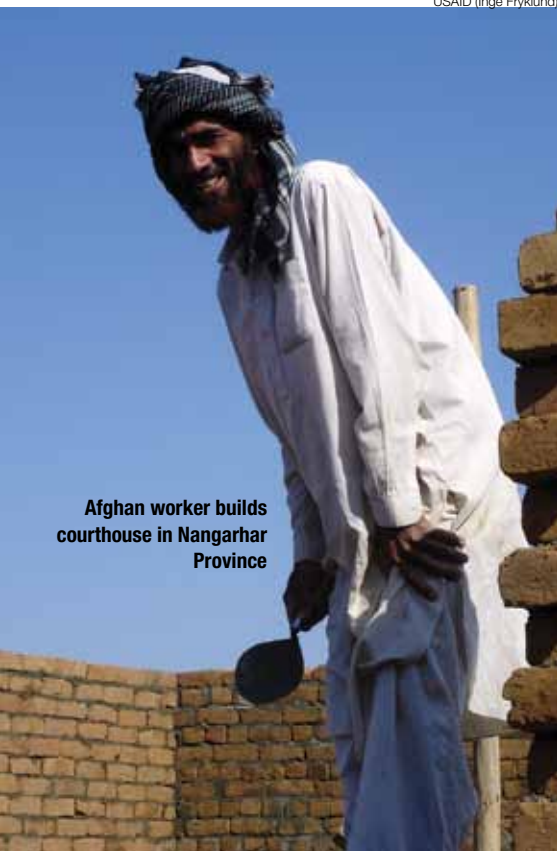
Similarly, the postconflict efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrated that reestablishing governance requires an understanding of local history and culture. While recreating functioning institutions is critical, gaining the trust of the populace is equally if not more important. Local leaders must believe we are attempting to find appropriate solutions for them and that we are not just transplanting our system onto their country. This is especially true in a state like Iraq that has a history of oppressive governance and a tendency to be skeptical of imposed solutions. The local leaders must also be convinced that our commitment to their success is long term and does not consist merely of the imposition of a Western-style system with which they will be uncomfortable and that they will be unable to maintain when we are gone.

Just as establishing trust within the populace is critical, maintaining that trust is directly tied to our ability, and to that of the coalition in both countries, to deliver on our promises. Early in the postconflict stabilization of Iraq, the CPA promised dramatic and timely improvements to the Iraqi economy. When the coalition's inability to suppress the insurgency for a lengthy period resulted in critical delays in economic development, frustration mounted among the people and the fledgling Iraqi government. The key lesson is that coalition leaders must match authority and capacity in postconflict settings while carefully managing the expectations of the populace. More importantly, sound planning must ensure that right-sized missions are undertaken so achievable goals can be met. As important as matching authority with capacity is the need to demonstrate the ability to implement projects quickly. The Commander's Emergency Response Fund has assisted in providing this capacity in Iraq at the local level.

Finally, both Iraq and Afghanistan have shown that the speed with which we introduce private enterprise and promote economic development is fundamental to the success of the stabilization effort. The one-crop narcotic economy in Kabul poses special challenges to our stabilization effort because unless alternative livelihoods are provided, and quickly, the economy will likely take the whole process down. Fortunately, the Afghan people are motivated and dedicated, and our extension of

USAID (Inge Fryklund)

Afghan worker builds courthouse in Nangarhar Province





credit and assistance in the development of real alternatives, combined with effective training, will be key if we are to succeed in Kabul.

### Institutions and Laws

Rebuilding the foundations of a civil society and establishing effective governance are always the most difficult and time-consuming elements of the transition process. A transfer of authority from the intervening power to a newly established government, usually through both a security agreement and a Strategic Framework Agreement (as in Iraq), is accompanied by the development and adoption of laws and regulations, training in their application and enforcement, investments in appropriate infrastructure, and the transfer to civilian control from the coalition leadership. This transfer to indigenous political institutions, to include functioning legislative bodies and accountable executives, requires both time and the willingness of local leaders to take ownership.

The most significant challenges faced by the fledgling governments include developing economic capacity, maintaining civilian control of security structures, and administering the rule of law. Building a viable economic base involves the creation of markets, the chartering of a banking system, and the development of a fair and accepted system of taxation. As the people in Iraq and Afghanistan

---

*as Iraq and Afghanistan transition to openness and competition, they must develop regulations to address clashing economic interests, legal systems to adjudicate disputes, and a political process with authority to check executive behavior*

---

transition from societies based upon imposed order to societies based on openness and competition, they must also develop regulations to address clashing economic interests, legal systems to adjudicate disputes, and a political process with sufficient authority to check excessive executive behavior.

The most frequently cited shortcoming in nationbuilding is the failure to develop the necessary local capacity, legitimacy, and effectiveness to sustain the rule of law and maintain order. Key to this challenge is effective

civilian control of security structures, to include civilian police, civilian control of the military, and competent and respected defense and interior ministries. Similarly, administering the rule of law impartially is critical to the new government being perceived as having legitimacy, and key to this legitimacy is respect for the judiciary, the court system, the penal system, and the constitution under which they operate. Creating local capacity often takes far more time than donor countries and their citizens are willing to give. For this reason, timely development of effective local leadership and control is critical to a positive transition from stabilization to other stages of postconflict development.

### The Way Forward

To better foster the development of internal capacity in newly reminted states like Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States must develop a *permanent* civilian capability that both complements our military effort and contributes to the leveraging of multilateral efforts. The Nation began that effort 6 years ago when the Office of Stabilization and Reconstruction (S/CRS) was established in the State Department. With the signing of National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 44 and the issuance of DOD Directive 3000.05 in 2005, an organization was created to lead interagency civilian efforts and coordinate between these agencies and the military to help countries emerging from conflict build a sustainable government. The purpose of S/CRS vis-à-vis civilian agencies is much like the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) role with respect to the combatant commands. Like the JCS, which ensures that all forces interoperate within a theater to achieve a common goal, the charge of S/CRS is to lead the design of a common U.S. stabilization strategy in a given theater for civilian agencies and between those agencies and the military.

Other core elements are also critical to establishing a viable stabilization organization. The first is the capability to quickly deploy a competent field team to survey requirements and spearhead civilian program strategies on the ground. It should include a mix of economic, security, communications, construction, and political specialists. Presently, members are sent to these teams on an ad hoc basis from various State Department posts, rather than serving in primary assignments where their expertise is reinforced through continuous training. A permanent

corps established under the aegis of S/CRS would ensure that the civilian side of the government has skills that more fully complement our military capacity.

PRTs in Afghanistan reflect a successful application of these principles in that these teams include a mix of military and civilian

---

*the capacity to deploy trained and capable civilians in military-led PRTs increases their effectiveness and allows stabilization and reconstruction efforts to begin under the military umbrella*

---

personnel and can be tailored to reflect the level of threat in the area being worked. The capacity to deploy trained and capable civilians in military-led PRTs increases their effectiveness and allows stabilization and reconstruction efforts to begin under the military umbrella. The PRT can help build the host nation's legitimacy and effectiveness in providing security to its citizens and delivering essential government services. The focus of these combined military and civilian efforts is to diminish the means and motivations for conflict, while developing local institutions so they can take the lead role in national governance.

The PRT can bridge the gap between conflict and stability and assist in areas that have not been pacified sufficiently to remove security forces. The military can operate effectively but lacks the development skills to enhance economic viability and deliver essential public services. The PRT solves this problem and, when stability objectives are fulfilled, can be dismantled in favor of traditional development programs.

The State and Defense Departments have begun to take steps to better coordinate stability and reconstruction activities, but key challenges remain. Without an interagency planning framework that better defines roles and responsibilities, as contemplated by NSPD 44, unity of effort may remain difficult to achieve, and DOD-centric planning will likely continue. More importantly, unless the State Department develops and implements a credible plan to build a permanent civilian stabilization organization rather than maintaining the current ad hoc approach, DOD will continue to be heavily relied upon to provide the needed expertise for transition operations. **JFQ**

# USCYBERCOM

## The Need for a Combatant Command versus a Subunified Command

By DAVID M. HOLLIS

**U**nited States Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) is a subunified command under United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM). It was scheduled for an October/November 2009 initial operating capability (currently delayed) and an October 2010 full operational capability. There are some excellent reasons why the Secretary of Defense chose to initiate a subunified warfighting command for the cyberspace domain, but the situation facing the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Federal Government will require USCYBERCOM to develop into a full combatant command (COCOM) in the next 5 years.

The decision to create a subunified command for the cyberspace domain was made at the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) level. There are several fundamental requirements for reorganizing DOD elements into a COCOM. But the decision to create a subunified command was based on a number of factors, one of which is the nature of the current threat. The present situation and potential ramifications are sufficiently aggressive and of such a hostile nature that DOD must take immediate action to mitigate and eventually neutralize the ongoing threat.<sup>1</sup> DOD's cyberspace domain and data infrastructure encompass numerous critical

Lieutenant Colonel David M. Hollis, USAR, is a Joint Plans Officer with U.S. Strategic Command and a Senior Policy Analyst with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence.

Airman replaces outdated network at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan

U.S. Air Force (James L. Harper, Jr.)



vulnerabilities. OSD staff and congressional requirements for development of a full COCOM are difficult to achieve in the compressed timeframe as required by the threat and known vulnerabilities. Developing and focusing DOD's capability to conduct network warfare (NETWAR, as defined by the Army)<sup>2</sup> are urgent requirements. The reduced up-front effort to develop a subunified command would more quickly achieve DOD's immediate goal of a unified full-spectrum cyberwar capability. Additionally, internal DOD opposition to a full COCOM could extend the time required for its standup. Numerous COCOMs, Services, and agencies have developed their own NETWAR and cyberspace elements and want to maintain their independent capabilities. Yet these organizations are also looking to a unified authority to synchronize their own capabilities and plans.<sup>3</sup>

A subunified command under USSTRATCOM would effectively establish an intermediate goal toward the development of a full cyber COCOM, with a similar but reduced structure, mission, and authority compared to a full unified COCOM. The development of a subunified command is a rapid and effective step toward development of synchronized and focused DOD capabilities in cyberspace/NETWAR.

### Cyberspace Definition and Warfighting Domain

Global cyberspace activity has occurred since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the telegraph, telephone, and radio created the first electronic information grid, matured into global interconnectivity, and permitted large-scale information exchange. The first electronic data transactions across early computer networks (Advanced Research Projects Agency Network/Military Network) evolved into what is today recognized as the Internet. Threats, vulnerabilities, and risks have grown exponentially with the proliferation of use and dependence on the cyberspace infrastructure. The electronic dependence of modern civilization on physical infrastructure (transport layer), massed data/information (storage, transmittal, and transaction), and the resulting critical infrastructure functionality (finance, health, utilities, government, and so forth) requires a seamless Internet environment. Consequently, cyberspace has become a warfighting domain with the inherent potential to destroy and/or render useless logical, physical, technical, and virtual infrastructure,

and to damage critical national capabilities such as economic, government, military, educational, health, social, and other capabilities.

Cyberspace and its various definitions have been around since the 1980s.<sup>4</sup> In the 2006 *National Military Strategy for Cyberspace Operations* (NMS-CO), the Joint Chiefs of Staff defined *cyberspace* as "a domain characterized by the use of electronics and the electromagnetic spectrum to store, modify and exchange data via networked systems and associated physical infrastructures."<sup>5</sup> In contrast, the George W. Bush administration's

---

### *the electronic dependence of modern civilization requires a seamless Internet environment*

---

2003 *National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace* does not use the word *data* in its definition: "Cyberspace is composed of hundreds of thousands of interconnected computers, servers, routers, switches, and fiber optic cables that allow our critical infrastructures to work. Thus, the healthy functioning of cyberspace is essential to our economy and our national security."<sup>6</sup> Various U.S. Government agencies now agree that cyberspace is a warfighting and operational domain, but what that actually means is unclear, and there are numerous other definitions.<sup>7</sup>

Elements of the cyberspace domain are common to the other warfighting domains; land, sea, air, and space are all interactive and require cross-domain planning, and cyberspace is no different. Cyberspace domain superiority supports freedom of action in all other domains and denies freedom of action to adversaries; it is a predicate to successful military operations. In addition, cyberspace offensive weapons have several analogies with nuclear/space forces. Their effects are global in nature—they cannot be contained to a specific geographic COCOM or theater. Cyberspace weapons, once used, lose their deterrent value and effectiveness because the opposing forces can immediately build counterdefenses.

However, military operations in the cyberspace domain are radically different from military operations in the other warfighting domains. For example, cyberspace is an artificial construct and does not primarily exist in the natural world, while the other domains exist in nature. Cyberwar/NETWAR will primarily be fought over network terrain that is owned and operated

by private sector entities, many of them multinational corporations. Military operations in the cyberspace domain simultaneously include physical and logical maneuver space. Cyberspace is a vastly shifting landscape compared to the other domains:

*Cyberspace is dynamic and continually evolving. Changes in cyberspace are driven in large part by private industry research and development. The interdependency and innovation of civilian economic markets and communications industries have a direct impact on cybersecurity and military effectiveness. The domain itself is expanding and evolving as information technology and the market expand and evolve. In other words, portions of cyberspace continuously change due to technical innovation, including the addition, removal, replacement, or reconfiguration of components, and network protocols.<sup>8</sup>*

Cyberspace is also one of the leading investment opportunities for the private sector.<sup>9</sup> For these reasons, it has intricate, undefined, and extremely challenging legal implications.

Far more than in the other warfighting domains, offensive warfare is dominant in the cyberspace domain.<sup>10</sup> Red Teams historically penetrate all ".mil" network defenses, at a nominal cost compared to the huge expense of creating and maintaining network defense. For example, if a particular server has 100 potential vulnerabilities, and the network administrator performs Herculean efforts to patch 99 of them (99 percent success rate on patches), any decent Red Team will find that single unpatched vulnerability and take control of the box, rendering the entire defensive effort useless. As an analogy, consider the battles of Crecy (1346) and Agincourt (1415), where English longbowmen slaughtered the French knights charging them. Before these encounters, the dominant offensive form of Western warfare was in the figure of a mounted armored knight. A technology (the longbow) and an organization (disciplined English foot soldiers) reversed this trend by creating a major imbalance favoring the defensive form of warfare after centuries of domination by the offensive form. Cyberspace, however, has not undergone any technological or organizational revolution that changes the extreme dominance and inherent imbalance of offensive cyberwarfare.

Much of what is considered offensive cyberspace activity does not meet the criteria of “attack” in the other domains. Shutting down or massively corrupting data in critical financial, health, or power grid networks constitutes an attack on national sovereignty and may or may not justify a use-of-force response

domains. Cyberspace weapons can be created by anyone and launched in almost complete anonymity—a high-school student cannot spend a few nights hunched over a keyboard and create an F-22 fighter but could create a cyberspace weapon that could potentially disrupt major corporate and military

implications (strengths and vulnerabilities) for the United States, aggressor nations, and nonstate actors.<sup>11</sup> This instantaneous nature and the ability to attack the entire domain simultaneously are characteristics that potentially make the cyberspace domain a much more dangerous and vulnerable domain.

The United States has not achieved dominance in the cyberspace domain. We intuitively understand that we dominate all warfighting domains except cyber—and our national economy, livelihood, civilization, and culture are as dependent on it as our military. Cyberspace is the only domain without a primary Service as lead and the only domain in which DOD will not defend the U.S. homeland.<sup>12</sup> For example, if DOD defended the land domain in the same manner as cyberspace, a Russian land (amphibious/airborne) invasion of New Jersey would have to be fought by U.S. citizens and commercial entities with whatever weapons they happened to possess. DOD would only defend Fort Monmouth and Fort Dix.

### Why Should USCYBERCOM Be a COCOM?

**Unity of Command/Effort.** Current DOD approaches to cyberwarfare are scattered and fragmented across the Services and agencies. The Services, Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), National Security Agency, Intelligence Community, and many of the other COCOMs have unsynchronized cyberspace warfighting capabilities. Unifying DOD’s cyberspace effort into a focused subunified command is a necessary first step, but creating a separate and distinct USCYBERCOM as a fully functioning COCOM would provide it with indispensable authority, responsibility, legitimacy, and visibility. This would enable a stronger unity



U.S. Fleet Forces commander speaks during standup ceremony for Navy Cyber Forces

(a political rather than legal or technical decision). A cyberspace attack on a supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system that results in casualties or a regional power failure could be considered a kinetic effect to an offensive cyberspace operation.

At the other end of the spectrum, actions such as pinging, browsing, or port scanning are often used simply for the effective functioning of DOD networks and cyberspace operations and may or may not have hostile intent. Additionally, the vast majority of malware, botnets, and network intrusions into DOD’s networks are technically competitive measures, espionage, vandalism, or crimes that fall under the category of technical network defense responses or traditional law enforcement/counterintelligence functions. These are not attacks on U.S. sovereignty. In many cases, this type of attack would be better described as network *irritation* than as network *attack*. But this noise-level network irritation can disguise a host of more serious attacks and needs to be cleaned out.

Cyberspace, due to its potential, differs considerably from the other warfighting

networks and cause physical havoc. Attribution is almost impossible across the cyberspace domain; while it is difficult to envision a major/conventional ground, sea, or air attack that cannot be attributed to a nation-state, it is practically impossible to achieve attribution of a nation-state cyberspace aggressor if it chose anonymity. Key to successful cyberwarfare is attribution, which becomes increasingly difficult with current technology and Internet network communications terrain. Few attackers are identified unless they “self-identify” or are caught discussing their exploits in an unsecured chat room or a social network site. Attributing responsibility for state-sponsored operations can be practically impossible.

Operations in cyberspace occur near the speed of light and in real time, and often can impact the entire spectrum of the cyberspace domain simultaneously without notice or intelligence indicators. In military planning concepts, operations in the cyberspace domain can move from phase zero (shaping operations) to phase two (seizing the initiative) or even to phase three (dominating) instantaneously and worldwide, with huge

*a high-school student cannot spend a few nights hunched over a keyboard and create an F-22 fighter but could create a cyberspace weapon that could potentially disrupt major corporate and military networks*

of command/effort across DOD and greater influence across the entire U.S. Government. Since the United States does not dominate the cyberspace domain, establishing a full COCOM would provide greater authority and



responsibility to address this glaring national weakness.<sup>13</sup> Because of the unique nature of the domain, no one Service is responsible for operations to protect national cyberspace (unlike the other domains); a full COCOM would be better resourced and have greater authority and responsibility to compensate for the lack of a specific Service lead. USCYBERCOM will require acquisition authority similar to that of U.S. Special Operations Command in order to unify and streamline the procurement of military cyberspace capabilities (tools/weapons and associated training, doctrine, and support systems) as opposed to each individual Service developing and fielding an uncoordinated and disjointed set of cyberspace capabilities. The fragmentation of the Government's efforts to define, govern, regulate, defend, exploit (for intelligence purposes), and conduct operations in the cyberspace domain is embodied in the proliferation of definitions of *cyberspace*.<sup>14</sup>

**Synchronization.** USSTRATCOM is tasked under the Unified Command Plan to direct the defense of the Global Information Grid<sup>15</sup> and synchronize cyberspace operations. As a subunified command, USCYBERCOM probably will have insufficient authority to fully synchronize across the Services and other COCOMs. For example, geographic COCOMs might decide in the future to conduct full-spectrum cyberspace operations within their geographic areas of responsibility (AORs). This approach is incompatible with the nature of cyberspace/NETWAR operations and would be in conflict with three postulations:

- *Geographic COCOMs who wanted to use cyberspace weapons as part of a regional geopolitical and military decision process would be potentially wasting strategic, one-time-use assets on regional objectives.* Offensive, full-spectrum cyberspace weapons are strategic in nature: once used, knowledge of their specific capabilities spreads across the Internet, and opponents can then adjust their defenses. An excellent example is a weaponized “zero-day” exploit—that is, an attack against a specific vulnerability currently unknown to the Internet community. Use of this weapon is a one-time launch. The worldwide Internet community will be able to rapidly create defenses and write and implement software patches against it.

- *The technical workings of the Internet argue for a centralized authority and responsibility for potential offensive cyberspace opera-*

*tions.* If a specific geographic COCOM decides to launch a cyberspace offensive weapon from its location directly against a particular country (or a nonstate target within a country) in its AOR, the nature of the Internet ensures that the actual packets would cross routers, switches, and networks in countries outside the COCOM AOR. Packets often end up relayed by satellites across multiple continents. The attack cannot be confined to a direct line between the COCOM and the targeted country, and backscatter and blind retaliation may occur. These attacks would cross and impact other geographic COCOM AORs.

- *The potential exists for certain attacks or types of cyberspace weapon to get out of control once launched.* The original Robert Morris worm in 1988 was not intended to take the Internet down, but it almost did. A cyberspace action taken by a geographic COCOM has a strong probability of impacting other geographic COCOMs and could have global implications. The potential unintended consequences of launching various cyberspace weapons argue for centralized command, control, and release authority.<sup>16</sup>

**Mass.** At least 13 different doctrinal documents at the OSD, DOD, agency, Service, and USSTRATCOM levels outline how DOD will fight a cyberwar. A central COCOM with exclusive authority and responsibility to conduct and synchronize cyberspace operations should consolidate the varied works into a concise doctrinal template from which DOD can conduct cyberspace operations. Each Service has its own doctrine and capability to conduct military operations in cyberspace.<sup>17</sup> Cyberwar/NETWAR capabilities need to be massed into one coordinated and synchronized set of strategic operations in order to achieve the intended massed effects. All aspects of cyberspace domain operations (defense, offense, network operations, and intelligence) need to be closely synchronized to eliminate any possible gaps or seams in the overall cyberspace posture.

**Offensive Operations.** The offensive form of cyberspace operations is far superior to the defensive form. DOD and the U.S. Government need to place more emphasis on the offensive form of full-spectrum cyberwar to support and ensure an appropriate defense. They must be prepared to answer cyberspace incidents with technical and nontechnical means of response and retaliation—preemptive or responsive actions across the diplo-

matic, informational, military, and economic spectrum to retaliate against aggressors and deter potential adversaries.

---

*the potential unintended consequences of launching various cyberspace weapons argue for centralized authority*

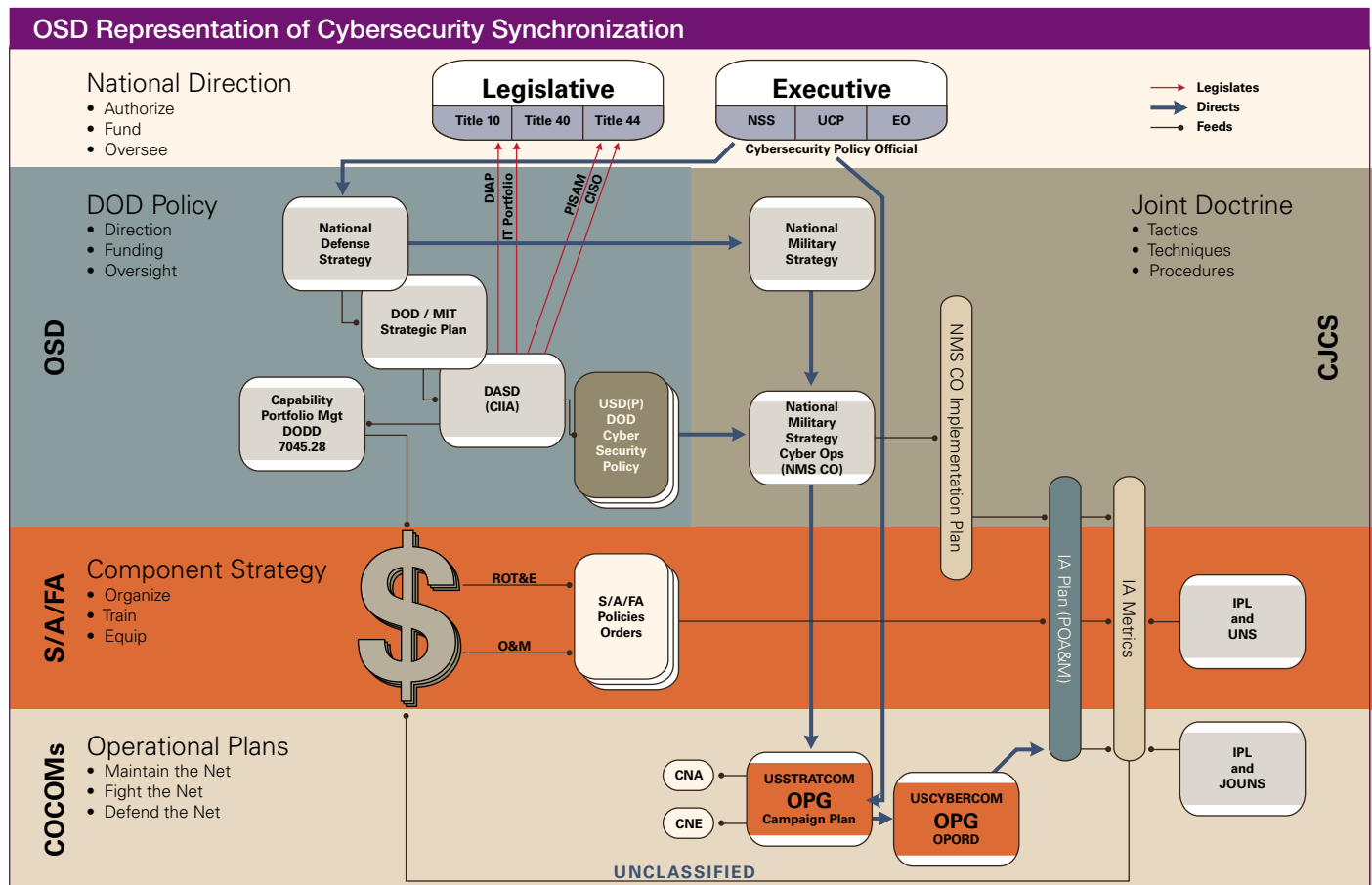
---

**Diverse Mission Focus.** The Obama administration has made limited attempts to protect the Nation from cyberspace threats,<sup>18</sup> but there are several national issues that require greater attention. Each Federal organization is focused on its individual mission area and responsibilities regarding cyberspace operations. The Obama administration decision to appoint a “Cyber Czar” (to organize the fragmented Federal Government cyberspace capabilities into a coherent and synchronized element) is a step in the right direction. However, the decision was clearly a low priority to the administration, and the position appears to lack the authority to properly focus and discipline the contentious Federal agencies on cyberspace domain concerns. This lack of central control has resulted in loose policy oversight by the Office of Management and Budget, OSD, Department of Homeland Security, and Department of Justice in their respective cyberspace responsibilities and capabilities, with weak or nonexistent policy compliance mechanisms. Additionally, divided Federal funding lines lead to more fragmentation of operational and command authority. Each department/Service/agency receives its own funding for information technology (IT)/cyberspace operations and purchases its own equipment (resulting in a failure of not only compatibility, information-sharing, and security, but also in the ability to leverage government buying power). Resource and performance metrics in cyberspace are weak or nonexistent. Cyberspace base funding in DOD (cutting across IT and information operations budgets but also found in electronic warfare and force protection budgets) is supplemented in an uncoordinated and fragmented fashion from the Comprehensive National Cyberspace Initiative,<sup>19</sup> and many other initiatives such as the OSD/DISA CyberCampaign Plan. The figure illustrates and provides details concerning DOD efforts to synchronize cyberspace security authority and resources.

There is a compelling requirement for a central DOD organization with the capability and authority to command and control, coordinate, and synchronize cyberwar/NETWAR functions at least across DOD, and possibly across the entire U.S. Government and the Nation at large. The coordination and synchronization mission for this command is critical—the Internet reaches across the entire modern enterprise. It touches not just those connected to it, but also those who are unaware how their lives are governed by technology. Every individual, every government, and every nation-state has a stake in the process. The technologies and domain environmental characteristics involved with cyberwar/NETWAR are strategic in nature,

worldwide in scope, and overwhelmingly dominated by the offensive form of warfare—all leading to the requirement for centralized DOD and U.S. Government authority. The network terrain over which cyberwar/NETWAR will be conducted is radically different from the physical world of other warfighting domains in that it can affect not only that which is “network” but also that which is “network controlled”—life-support systems, SCADA, physical infrastructure, and so forth. The cyber domain is sufficiently different from other warfighting domains that it requires a command with the requisite authority, responsibilities, and resources to successfully conduct DOD’s full-spectrum cyberwar/NETWAR operations

with the understanding that the mission of the Defense Department is the defense of the Nation, regardless of domain. The DOD solution needs to be the establishment of a subunified command with the goal of a full combatant command in the near future. The requirement for a central authority to conduct cyberdefense/cyberwar/NETWAR is time-critical due to glaring network defensive vulnerabilities, the potential for disastrous consequences for the Defense Department’s global network and the national/global Internet, the potential destruction of the national infrastructure, and the lives of U.S. citizens. These threats are even more critical due to the instantaneous nature of the Internet. As DOD facilitates economic globalization and



Source: OSD Defense Information Assurance Program briefing on USCYBERCOM standup, by author.

Key: CISO = Chief Information Security Officer; CJCS = Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; CNA = Computer Network Attack; CNE = Computer Network Exploitation; COCOM = Combatant Command; DASD (CIIA) = Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Cyber, Information, and Identity Assurance) (under the Assistant Secretary of Defense [Networks and Information Integration]/DOD Chief Information Officer); DIAP = Defense Information Assurance Program; DOD = Department of Defense; DODD = Department of Defense Directive; EO = Executive Order; IA = Information Assurance; IMIT = Information Management Information Technology; IPL = Integrated Priority List; JOUNS = Joint Operations Urgency of Need Statement; NMS CO = 2006 National Military Strategy for Cyberspace Operations; NSS = National Security Strategy; O&M = Operations and Maintenance; OPG = Operations Planning Group; OPORD = Operation Order; OSD = Office of the Secretary of Defense; POA&M = Plans of Action and Milestones; RDT&E = Research, Development, Testing, and Evaluation; S/A/FA = Services/Agencies/Field Activity; UCP = Unified Command Plan; UNS = Urgency of Need Statement; USD(P) = Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.



international trade in the physical realm (for example, the U.S. Navy provides security to international maritime traffic), it is also the only organization that can perform similar security operations in the virtual Internet realm. It is clearly in our national interest to secure and dominate the cyberspace environment.

Current DOD and U.S. Government efforts to conduct cyberdefense/cyberwar/NETWAR are badly fragmented and require greater central authority and integration/synchronization of overall cyberspace operations. Resources to defend the national strategic portions of the cyberspace domain are woefully inadequate, and many of the resources are acquired and deployed in an unfocused and uncoordinated fashion. The development of a subunified command is a necessary first step toward resolving these issues. It provides an effective tradeoff between the time required to develop a central cyberwar organization and the immediate need to provision that organization with the authority to properly command and control, synchronize, and coordinate DOD's cyberdefense/cyberwar/NETWAR operations.

The subunified command can be developed and made operational more quickly than a full COCOM, yet it has many of the same authorities, roles, missions, and responsibilities. It has the same skeletal structure as a full COCOM with reduced capabilities. The next logical step is to use the subunified command as a core to launch a full combatant command to extend the resources and authority of USCYBERCOM to the essential level of authority and effectiveness. Cyberspace is a contested domain, and the United States needs sovereign options to defend itself and its global interests; to deter, dissuade, disrupt, deny, and defeat our adversaries; and to protect our national (economic, military, cultural, and social) interests. **JFQ**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Michael Posner, "America already is in a cyber war, analyst says," *Government Executive*, November 27, 2007, available at <www.govexec.com/dailyfed/1107/112707tdpm2.htm>. Also see Clifford May, "The E-Jihad," *National Review* blog posting, October 20, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, *The United States Army Concept of Operation (CONOPS) for Cyber-Electronics (C-E) 2010–2024*, author's draft, version 0.1, March 4, 2009, 14: "For C-E, NETWAR is the integrated use of computer network attack (CNA), computer network exploitation (CNE), space control (SC), electronic attack (EA), electronic warfare support (ES), and physical attack. It is supported by intelligence and creates both physical and cognitive effects."

<sup>3</sup> Wyatt Kash, "Cyber command in urgent need of strategy, military leaders say: Military leaders expect new command to articulate its strategy soon," *Federal Computer Week*, June 30, 2009, available at <www.fcw.com/Articles/2009/06/30/Military-leaders-Cyber-Command-strategy.aspx>. See also Bob Brewin, "Battlespace," *Government Executive*, 2008, available at <www.govexec.com/dailyfed/1008/101308wb.htm?rss=getoday>, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies, "Report of the CSIS Commission on Cybersecurity for the 44<sup>th</sup> Presidency," 2008, available at <http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/081208\_securingcyberspace\_44.pdf>, 48.

<sup>4</sup> William Gibson first defined *cyberspace* in his 1984 science fiction novel *Neuromancer*.

<sup>5</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *2006 National Military Strategy for Cyberspace Operations*, available at <www.DOD.mil/pubs/foi/ojcs/072105doc1.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> White House, National Security Council, *2003 National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace*, 2003, available at <www.dhs.gov/xprevprot/programs/editorial\_0329.shtm>.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Air Force Cyberspace Command, *Strategic Vision 2008*, available at <www.afcyber.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-080303-054.pdf>; David Fahrenkrug, "Cyberspace Defined," Air University, available at <www.au.af.mil/au/aunews/archive/0209/Articles/CyberspaceDefined.html>; Office of the Secretary of Defense Policy Memorandum, "Cyberspace Operations," 2008, available at <http://afei.org.documents/newcyberdefinition.pdf>; "Memorandum for Secretaries of Military Departments, Subject: The Definition of Cyberspace," 2008; Dan Kuehl, "From Cyberspace to Cyberpower: Defining the Problem," available at <www.carlisle.army.mil/DIME/documents/Cyber%20Chapter%20Kuehl%20Final.doc>.

<sup>8</sup> The *United States Army Concept of Operation* on page 10 also contains an excellent example of cyberspace as both logical and physical maneuver space utilized simultaneously.

<sup>9</sup> Lisa Springer, "Cyber Security: The Next Great Defense Opportunity," *Investor Ideas* (June 16, 2009), available at <www.investorideas.com/News/061609A.asp>. Also see C. Drew and J. Markoff, "Contractors Vie for Plum Work Hacking for U.S.," *The New York Times*, May 31, 2009; and Gopal Ratnam, "Lockheed, Boeing Tap \$11 Billion Cybersecurity Market," *Bloomberg Information*, available at <www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601103&sid=an2\_Z6u1JPgw>.

<sup>10</sup> *Strategic Vision 2008*.

<sup>11</sup> For a more detailed description of the six planning phases, see Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5–0, *Joint Operation Planning*, 2006, available at <www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new\_pubs/jp5\_0.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Some thought has been given to DOD defense of civilian networks; see Ellen Nakashima, "Cyber-Command May Help Protect Civilian Networks," *The Washington Post*, May 5, 2009.

<sup>13</sup> STRATFOR, "U.S. Strengthening Cybersecurity," 2008, available at <www.stratfor.com/analysis/u\_s\_strengthening\_cybersecurity>.

<sup>14</sup> Wyatt Kash, "Report on House Homeland Security Subcommittee Hearings," *Government Computer News*, September 29, 2008, available at <http://gcn.com/Articles/2008/09/26/Wyatt-Kash--Elevate-cybersecurity.aspx>.

<sup>15</sup> Department of Defense Directive 8100.1, *Global Information Grid (GIG) Overarching Policy*, September 19, 2002, available at <http://biotech.law.lsu.edu/blaw/DODd/corres/pdf/d81001\_091902/d81001p.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> RAND, "Turning Density to Advantage: C4ISR and Information Operations as Examples," and J.S. Monroe, "Cyber Command: Observers worry about unintended consequences: DOD, NSA offer formidable pairing, experts say," *Federal Computer Week*, June 25, 2009, available at <www.fcw.com/Articles/2009/06/25/cyber-command-DOD-NSA.aspx>.

<sup>17</sup> See Noah Shachtman, "U.S. Cyber Command: 404 Error, Mission Not (Yet) Found," *Wired.com*, June 2009, available at <www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/06/foggy-future-for-militarys-new-cyber-command>; and Mark Hosenball, "The Turf War over Cyberwar," *Newsweek*, April 25, 2009, available at <www.newsweek.com/id/195107>.

<sup>18</sup> The White House, "White House Efforts to Protect Our Information Networks," available at <www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/homeland\_security/>.

<sup>19</sup> Department of Homeland Security, "Fact sheet: Protecting our Federal Networks against Cyber Attacks," available at <www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr\_1207684277498.shtm>. STRATFOR, "Cyberwarfare," July 21, 2008, available at <www.stratfor.com/analysis/u\_s\_strengthening\_cybersecurity>.

# THE End OF Surface Warships

By THOMAS E. SHRADER

**F**or centuries, battleships ruled the seas. Whoever had the biggest, baddest battleships with the most powerful cannons controlled valuable shipping lines and thus dominated much of the world. This was true throughout the centuries of the sailing ship, the brief era of the steamship, and finally the epoch of the diesel-powered ship.

Then came the invention of the aircraft in 1903. Military leaders soon grasped the wartime implications of aircraft, using them extensively to support ground operations during World War I. In the 1920s, some began to see the potential of airpower in naval operations. General Billy Mitchell, U.S. Army Air Corps, believed that aircraft would one day supersede battleships. He testified before Congress that “1,000 bombardment airplanes

can be built and operated for about the price of one battleship.”

During World War II, aircraft (launched from either the ground or carriers) showed their unquestionable superiority to battleships on several occasions. In December 1941, Japanese planes sank five U.S. battleships in a matter of minutes at Pearl Harbor. A few days later, other Japanese planes sank the British battleship *Prince of Wales*. And in 1945, U.S. aircraft sank the largest battleship ever constructed, the *Yamato* of the Empire of Japan.

Just as manned aircraft suddenly rendered once-mighty battleships obsolete, we are now on the cusp of a new era in which all surface warfare ships will become obsolete. It has not happened yet, but the handwriting is clearly on the wall. Soon they will become indefensible. Why? Because ships are expen-

USS *Missouri* Memorial moored at Battleship Row in Pearl Harbor

U.S. Navy (Mark Logico)





sive and manned, while missiles are cheap and unmanned. Also, satellites are rapidly making every inch of the Earth viewable with the click of a mouse. In the near future, there will be literally nowhere to hide. Let's look at these factors individually.

### **Ships: Expensive and Manned**

Ships are expensive, and they take years to build. Consider the current *Gerald R. Ford*-class supercarrier under construction. A brief Wikipedia search turns up the following factoids: It is going to cost somewhere around \$9 billion and take 5 years to construct. Once launched, at any given time it will have around 100 aircraft on board. At a conservative estimate of \$50 million per aircraft, that makes the carrier worth another \$5 billion. More important than the equipment is the manpower. It will take about 3,000 Sailors and pilots to man the ship and the planes. So, adding it all up, we will have an asset worth about \$14 billion floating around in the middle of the ocean with thousands of American lives on board.

Or let's consider one of the *Tarawa*-class amphibious assault ships used to bring Marines ashore. Each one costs around \$2 billion and can carry 30 helicopters. In the future, they will carry the F-35 Lightning jets that can be modified for vertical takeoff. Each ship carries almost 2,000 Marines and a crew of about 1,000 Sailors and officers. So here again we see a multibillion-dollar platform out at sea with thousands of American Servicemembers aboard. Either of the above would clearly be a juicy target for an enemy nation or a terrorist organization.

### **Missiles: Cheap and Unmanned**

Now let's take a glance at the cost of missiles. Searching the Internet, one can find a variety of antiship and ballistic missiles available in the \$1-million-each neighborhood. More primitive ones are much cheaper. Using \$1 million as a round figure means that we could buy 2,000 missiles for \$2 billion. So compared to the cost of a ship, we could purchase *thousands* of missiles. It is safe to assume that countries that are world powers could afford all they want.

Just as a historical vignette, consider the following. During its short war (only a few weeks) with Israel in 2006, Hizballah

launched over 4,000 rockets. Granted, these rockets were short-range and inaccurate. But the point remains clear. If a tiny non-state actor can afford to lob missiles by the

*we will have an asset worth about \$14 billion floating around in the middle of the ocean with thousands of American lives on board*

thousands, how many thousands more can a nation-state afford? The answer is: lots.

Along with being cheap, another key point is that missiles are unmanned—so we do not have to spend years training someone how to fly them. And we need not worry about pilots being killed or captured. If a few dozen or a hundred of them miss the target and plunge into the ocean, it is not a problem.

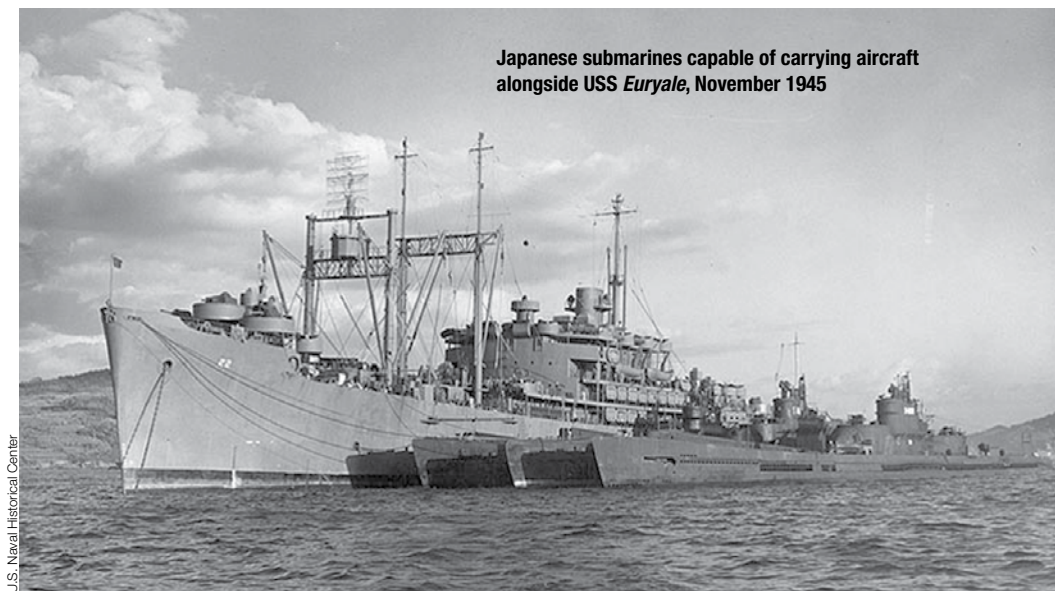
Adding up these factors, what other conclusion can we arrive at than that missiles

Today, satellites have changed all this. We can sit at our desks, type in an address, and have Google Earth show us the current view. Soon every inch of the Earth's oceans

will be visible by satellite. It will be a simple matter to find the exact grid coordinates of any ship anywhere in the world, punch the data into a missile silo, and launch a barrage of missiles to the precise location of the ship or fleet.

### **Countermeasures Won't Work**

The simple truth is that countermeasures will work, but only for a while. The Navy has sophisticated countermeasures that include the Aegis antiballistic missile system,



Japanese submarines capable of carrying aircraft alongside USS *Euryale*, November 1945

can be purchased (or manufactured) in such vast quantities that a barrage of them could destroy any ship on the high seas, no matter how big or how technologically advanced.

### **Satellites Change Everything**

Some may say: "But missiles have been around for decades. If this danger is so great, why hasn't this already happened?"

One reason is simple. As big as aircraft carriers are, they still can be hard to find out in the oceans. During World War II, for instance, the range of a Hellcat fighter jet was about 1,000 miles. This meant the carrier group had reconnaissance capability out to about 500 miles in any direction.

radar, and final protective lines of fire. These are all good systems, and effective at engaging individual incoming missiles. The problem is that they can be overwhelmed or confused by a massive barrage of incoming rounds. And even when they do work as planned, they only work while they have ammunition.

In other words, the Achilles' heel of every ship-borne system is that it is only effective as long as it has rounds to fire, which take up room on a ship and demand a lot of fuel to haul. So the farther we go from home base, the more expensive resupply becomes and the longer it takes. On the other hand, a land-based missile system can keep firing rounds indefinitely. In other words, all any

**Lieutenant Colonel Thomas E. Shrader, USA, is Chief of Media Operations for U.S. Forces–Iraq.**

Crew members man rails as USS *Iowa* returns to port after 3-month deployment



U.S. Navy (Jeff Hilton)

nation has to do to destroy one of our most valuable military assets—our capital ships—is to keep firing missiles (no matter how cheap or inferior they are) until the ship runs out of the rounds needed to defend itself.

### The Solution?

The solution is submarines. The unique advantage of submarines is, of course, that we cannot see them. No matter how many satellites are in the sky, they cannot see below the ocean's surface. Nuclear-powered submarines can stay

---

*all any nation has to do to destroy one of our most valuable military assets—our capital ships—is to keep firing missiles*

---

submerged for months on end. We need to exploit this capability and develop whole new classes of submarines, such as aircraft carriers, troop carriers, and cargo submarines.

Some of these suggestions may sound far-fetched. But during World War II, Japan actually built and deployed submarines with aircraft on board that were on their way across the Pacific to blow up the Panama Canal when the war ended. If it was possible to build such a submarine 60 years ago, why can we not do something similar or even better today?

Regarding assault ships, why can we not build submarines as troop carriers, then have them surface so Marines can deploy the last few hundred yards by inflatable raft or other small boats?

Cargo submarines could also be designed that open up for loading containerized shipping units or tactical vehicles. This cargo could be offloaded at piers using cranes, similar to how many surface ships are now loaded. Such submarines could be the only resupply line for heavy equipment if an enemy country or terrorist organization has eliminated our surface warships and is focusing now on our military cargo ships.

Technology changes warfare. It makes once-supreme systems outdated and ineffective. Just as steel battleships made wooden battleships suddenly seem archaic, and just as airplanes in their turn made the steel battleships obsolete almost overnight, we are now at the point in history where cheap, easily produced missiles will be able to home in on and overwhelm any surface combat ship, no matter how big or how advanced.

At this point, some may ask, "What business does an Army officer have writing about a Navy issue?" Sometimes being an outsider can be an advantage. Could a surface warfare officer really recommend the elimina-

tion of the entire surface fleet? Is that likely? Or would he be looked upon as a traitor by his fellow officers? Alternatively, if a submariner made the same suggestion, could it not be perceived as someone just trying to enhance his own rice bowl?

Being a complete outsider to the Navy, this Army officer can speak freely with no other objective than enhancing national security. Also, the Army has a vested interest in the safety and success of the Service. How else are we going to get our equipment to foreign shores? We might be able to fly our personnel in, but tanks, Strykers, mine-resistant ambush protected vehicles, and heavy expanded mobility tactical trucks generally depend on sea transport.

It takes years to engineer and build the ships we already know how to build, as evidenced by the current carrier under construction. So to engineer and build whole new fleets that we have never attempted before will be an enormous challenge. Hence, we have no time to lose, and should get started immediately designing, building, testing, and fielding the submarines outlined above. We must quickly operationalize the reality that surface ships are at great risk and that submarines may be our only viable way to achieve force projection in the future. **JFQ**





Soldiers with Army Evaluation Task Force demonstrate unmanned ground vehicle

U.S. Army (D. Myles Cullen)

# *Unmanned Systems*

## AND THE

# *Joint Team*

By MICHAEL W. ISHERWOOD

*There are those that see [Joint Strike Fighter] as the last manned fighter. I'm one that's inclined to believe that.<sup>1</sup>*

—ADMIRAL MICHAEL G. MULLEN

Comments similar to the Chairman's statement can generate heated debate. Whether or not his inclination proves correct, the Department of Defense (DOD) is committing more than \$18.9 billion to unmanned systems (UMS) development, procurement, and operations from 2009 to 2013, making it clear that unmanned capabilities are going to be an integral part of the future U.S. military.<sup>2</sup> Thus, force planners and warfighters will benefit from focusing on two things: first, on how UMS are contributing to contingency operations in U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) and other theaters of operation and how the systems can make joint operations more effective and efficient; and second, on solving the challenges facing future UMS development, allowing for enhanced integration and synchronization of the joint team.

This article explores these issues. It reinforces what UMS are accomplishing today while looking at them as a mechanism to forge new approaches to joint operations and force structure decisions.

Colonel Michael W. Isherwood, USAF (Ret.), is a Senior Analyst at the Northrop Grumman Analysis Center. In 2005–2006, he deployed as the Deputy Director, Air Component Coordination Element, to Combined Joint Task Force–76 at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan.

## UMS Today

Unmanned systems are not new. Prior to World War II, the War Department used the OQ-2 “Radio Plane” to train Army and Navy anti-aircraft gunners as it was not prudent for a pilot to fly within range of the novice gunners. In 1947 and 1948, the Air Force flew unmanned B-17s to collect radioactive materials after testing an atomic bomb.<sup>3</sup> During the Vietnam War, unmanned aircraft such as the Firebee relieved aircrews of the tedious and dangerous tasks of monitoring trail networks and locating surface-to-air missile sites. From these origins, unmanned systems became known for carrying out “dull, dangerous, and dirty” missions.

Today, UMS roles have expanded significantly. During the first 7 years of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) logged over 500,000 hours.<sup>4</sup> Air Force Lieutenant General Dave Deptula helped put UAS in perspective when he described the strike against Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a leader of al Qaeda in Iraq. It took 6 minutes for a pair of F-16s to deliver the LGB-12,500 pound bomb, but 6,000 hours of Predator time to track and pinpoint the target’s location.<sup>5</sup> Today’s UAS provide more than spot reconnaissance; they also contribute with wide area surveillance, target designation, full motion video, and weapons employment.

But UAS are not the sole UMS in the battlespace, as unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs) have conducted more than 30,000 missions in USCENTCOM during the same 7 years.<sup>6</sup> Ground systems focused on defeating and disarming improvised explosive devices, such as the ANDROS or the Manned Transportable Robotic System, provide most

of the ground unmanned capability. Soldiers and Marines are expanding their inventory, however, with capabilities such as the Dragon Runner, a 17-pound device that clears routes and buildings or uncovers tripwire traps. There is also the Mobile Detection, Assessment, and Response System, which augments base security details with continuous surveillance with semi-automated random patrols.<sup>7</sup> These are a few of the more than 6,000 UGVs fielded by the Services since 2001.<sup>8</sup>

The impetus to increase UMS contributions comes from a variety of sources. One has been the change of the operational environment and the expansion of the number of missions. In 1975, for example, U.S. forces were deployed to support the “1½ War Strategy” and prepared for military operations in northern central Europe and northeast Asia. More than 2.1 million Americans in uniform supported this readiness.

U.S. Forces are now engaged in combat in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa in addition to being deployed in dozens of operations around the world. Despite this higher operational tempo, the number of troops has declined to 1.4 million. The personnel cost of the all-volunteer force has increased 45 percent in the past 10 years, placing DOD under pressure to reduce manpower costs while making personnel in uniform more effective.<sup>9</sup>

Enabling fewer people to accomplish a mission is not new for the U.S. Armed Forces. During the early days of the Cold War, force planners sought a more cost-efficient means to provide for a nuclear force. The result was the strategic triad—nuclear bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles, and submarine-

launched ballistic missiles. The investments in ballistic missiles allowed a reduced bomber contingent and cut nuclear force operations and maintenance costs by 46 percent from 1969 to 1979. At the same time, the nuclear force’s survivability increased, adding to its deterrent value while a number of KC-135 air refueling aircraft were freed up for conventional missions.

*the personnel cost of the all-volunteer force has increased 45 percent in the past 10 years, placing DOD under pressure to reduce manpower costs while making personnel in uniform more effective*

Appreciating the value of UMS to current and future conventional campaigns allows force planners and warfighters to realize the potential to extend UMS contributions into adjacent military operations. Three illustrative scenarios help define the considerable benefits of UMS in the near future.

## Anti-piracy Operations

When integrated with land, sea, and air forces within a component, unmanned systems can enable the entire joint team to be more effective. One scenario highlighting this potential involves deploying maritime forces to deter piracy in the waters off the coast of Somalia.

The maritime component commander’s immediate challenge will be to gain awareness 200 miles east from Somalia and in the neighboring Gulf of Aden—an area of more than 480,000 square miles. If tasked for this mission today, a maritime combined task force (CTF) might include 20 destroyer-sized vessels, each with 300 Sailors and outfitted with an SH-60 helicopter.<sup>10</sup> A P-3 Orion detachment would support the mission and focus its surveillance and reconnaissance efforts in a high traffic area waterway while SH-60s could surveil an area out to 50 miles from their ships. At any given time, the task force could monitor 91,000 square miles.

Integrating maritime high altitude long endurance (HALE) and medium altitude long endurance (MALE) intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) UAS with surface ships could enable the CTF to cover the entire area with fewer forces. A single HALE orbit at 60,000 feet could cover over 300,000

**Aerial images such as this Global Hawk photo of Haiti earthquake damage provide commanders with situational awareness**



U.S. Southern Command



U.S. Army (Nuna Proving Ground Public Affairs Office)

**Future unmanned ground vehicles must have ability to adjust to terrain features and environment changes**



square miles with signals intelligence collection. Simultaneously, its onboard moving target indicator radar could detect vessels at a shorter range. When these data are fused with information from its Automatic Information System, which tracks cooperating commercial vessels, maritime commanders could discriminate legitimate commercial vessels from possible pirate ships.

Once a suspect vessel is detected, the commander could monitor that ship with the HALE or MALE UAS. A rotary-winged MALE UAS could be positioned within visual range of a suspect ship in a deterrent posture, giving the CTF additional options. If the suspect vessel functioned as a pirate “mother ship” and deployed smaller boarding boats, the MALE UAS could employ warning or disabling fire as a further deterrent. If physical intervention is required, UAS information could guide the SH-60 as it inserted and extracted personnel. Thus, the CTF, with integrated manned and unmanned maritime units, could gain greater situational awareness of ships moving throughout its area of operation. Armed with timely information, the CTF commander could be better postured to apply force in an effective manner.

In addition to increased mission effectiveness, the UAS force could allow the CTF to be more efficient. Three HALE and three MALE orbits, when combined with seven surface vessels, could provide the ability to surveil the entire area of operations. Sustaining three UAS orbits would require six to seven airframes. CTF flight operations costs would decrease from \$7 million to approximately \$1.7 million per day. The CTF would realize a corresponding decrease in ships, Sailors, and associated operations costs as well.

### Protecting U.S. Borders

There is potential to integrate land, sea, and air UMS to support missions that may be beyond the resources of the current joint force. One example is employing UAS and unmanned undersea vehicle (UUV) forces in a cooperative manner to help U.S. Northern Command monitor coastal waterways and detect semisubmersible vessels.

Operating a few feet below the surface, a semisubmersible vessel is often used by drug cartels to infiltrate contraband into the United States and is difficult to detect by aircraft. UUVs equipped with sensors and deployed in a “picket line” formation can detect the movement or engine noise from the submersible.

Once alerted, the UUV formation can triangulate an approximate location while maritime authorities direct a HALE or MALE UAS to search the surface area. If the disturbance is on the surface, the UAS electro-optical (EO) and

at a cost of roughly \$70,000 per day. The unmanned capability would provide the sustained surveillance while the manned helicopter (or ship) provides the intercept capability. This pairing of manned and unmanned

U.S. Navy (Tiffini Jones Vanderwey)



Chief of Naval Operations ADM Roughead drives semisubmersible boat seized from drug smugglers in Caribbean

infrared (IR) imagery or radar sensors can classify it and monitor it if warranted. If nothing is observed on the surface, a semisubmersible is present, and a U.S. Navy or Coast Guard vessel could be directed to the area to collect further information and intercept the vessel.

The costs associated with accomplishing this mission with current manned forces would be significant. The least expensive option would be to use maritime helicopters with a towed sonar array. The MH-53 could operate for 2 to 2½ hours, but its speed is limited to 20 knots when the array is deployed. As a result, 10 to 12 sorties would be

capability reflects the potential for the joint force to operate more effectively and efficiently.

### Support to Humanitarian Operations

A final example of how UMS can extend the capability of the joint force is seen in humanitarian and disaster relief operations. Often, such operations occur in areas where U.S. forces are not deployed, thrusting commanders into a situational awareness vacuum. During support for peacekeeping operations in Liberia (2003), the Indonesian tsunami (2004), or the Pakistan earthquake (2005), the joint force was tasked for an immediate

---

*there is potential to integrate land, sea, and air unmanned systems to support missions that may be beyond the resources of the current joint force*

---

required to cover a 100-nautical-mile line over a 24-hour period with the helicopter making five passes along that line. In other words, the sensor would not be continuously present. The flight operations and maintenance cost would be at least \$400,000 per day.

In contrast, three UUVs could monitor the same 100-nautical-mile line *continuously*

response but lacked prior knowledge of the country's infrastructure, people, or military forces and their disposition.

ISR forces are often first on scene to collect data that commanders need for these short-notice operations, such as survivor locations; status of bridges, roads, waterways, and dikes; geospatial data; and other time-critical

information. The air component's ISR inventory offers a flexible and responsive tool for such contingencies. To appreciate how unmanned ISR systems can improve the joint team's mission effectiveness, consider a situation where U.S. forces are called to support humanitarian aid delivery into Darfur in West Africa.

One of the mainstays of the air component's ISR inventory has been the U-2 sensor suite, which collects signal information while also providing EO and IR imagery. Human limitations, however, constrain the aircraft's sortie length to 9–12 hours. If launched from a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) base in southern Italy, the U-2 could transit the 1,900 miles to the region and have 3 hours time on station (TOS). During each sortie, the U-2 could map 3 percent of the region.

By comparison, a HALE UAS such as Global Hawk could provide the same type of information but with greater TOS. The airframe has the ability to remain airborne in excess of 32 hours. During its extended TOS, a HALE UAS could map over 50 percent of the region.

In addition to improved mission effectiveness, UAS offer force structure efficiencies. For instance, while supporting NATO operations in Kosovo, the Air Force deployed 5 U-2s and 175 Airmen. If committed to support Darfur operations, those U-2s could provide a maximum of 15 hours per day of coverage. By comparison, two Global Hawks,

supported by 35 deployed personnel, could ensure continuous coverage.

### Future Challenges

Integrating UMS into the joint force, thereby making joint operations more effective and efficient, requires recognizing and overcoming a number of challenges. Three key areas stand out: command and control, sense and avoid, and joint procurement.

**Command and Control.** The need for a common mission management system or ground control station (GCS) drives the need for better command and control of unmanned systems. Currently, each UMS has a unique GCS, increasing the procurement cost and requiring specialized training for its operators. One of a kind GCS also requires

*future common ground control stations should take human factors engineering into account*

individual integration into the joint force command and control network.

To overcome these problems, the DOD acquisition chief in February 2009 directed the Services to pursue common GCS with open architecture that allows for rapid innovation, fewer complications when integrating with theater operations, and improved training.<sup>11</sup> This is a logical step. For UAS, as an example, the GCS is the equivalent of the "cockpit" for the aircrew. Today, manned aircraft share certain common components. For example, human factors engineering has produced aircraft with gear handles of the same shape and size, radios that function in similar manners with common switches, and common heads-up information displays. In addition to promoting more efficient training, common cockpit designs promote flight safety by not requiring pilots to relearn basic crew-aircraft interface and habit patterns.

Future common GCS should also take human factors engineering into account. Unmanned vehicles will have certain tasks common to each vehicle. To the maximum extent possible, GCS must capitalize on the proven technical solution for such basic tasks. As a result, scarce research and development funds can be dedicated to unique UMS mission capabilities.

**Sense and Avoid.** A second area for improvement across all domains is in UMS

ability to sense and avoid obstacles and objects in their environment. For UAS, the primary consideration is avoiding other aircraft. Currently, when operating in U.S. airspace, pilots follow a "see and avoid" mandate with other aircraft. The challenge is to develop advanced Traffic Collision Avoidance Systems that have the highest degree of confidence for aircraft deconfliction, whether the other aircraft is manned or whether its transponder is emitting.<sup>12</sup>

Avoidance for UAS includes surviving advanced air defense threats. UAS operate in a permissive environment, but future joint operations may require them to penetrate denied airspace, necessitating improved vehicle survivability. Maneuverability has often been one of the aircraft's attributes to enhance its survivability, and the unmanned vehicle will not be limited by the 9G human performance boundary that restricts current fighter aircraft employment. Unmanned aircraft capable of sustaining 20, 30, or even 40G maneuvers are conceivable but will require new technologies.<sup>13</sup>

Sense and avoid capabilities for future UGVs will be more complex. If the maritime and air environments are relatively homogenous, the land domain has more intricate obstacles, as UGVs must navigate ditches, curbs, shrubs, collapsed bridges, downed trees, and power lines, as well as injured and immobile personnel. UGVs must also have the ability to adjust autonomously to changes in the environment. While operating on clear roads or fields in the morning, the unmanned ground vehicle could then have to contend with snow, ice, or mud suddenly as weather alters ground conditions. This requires future unmanned ground vehicles to detect, classify, and assess their maneuverability around wider ranges of situations.<sup>14</sup> In addition, the land environment has more moving obstacles than the corresponding maritime or air domains.

Sense and avoid technologies permitting operations in these environments will also enable autonomous or semiautonomous operations underground, in bunkers, or in buildings where the UGV cannot receive Global Positioning System (GPS) signals for navigation, requiring advanced intelligence visual navigation. An unmanned ground vehicle will also require a means to protect itself from tampering when it operates within a population.<sup>15</sup>

The maritime domain has distinct challenges as well. More robust propulsion systems are necessary for sustained speed and distance, but today's UUVs rely on limited battery power. Future generations will need

Airmen position ground control station



U.S. Air Force (James R. Bell)



improved power sources to gain the range and speed required for these vehicles to have a greater role in the joint team.

**Joint Acquisition.** The final key challenge in UMS is the willingness of the Services to view unmanned systems acquisition as an opportunity to improve joint acquisition. With the manipulation of sensors and exploitation of data removed from the air vehicle, UMS procurement can allow for greater commonality and interoperability of the vehicle. This potential is evident with the Air Force Global Hawk and Navy Broad Area Maritime Surveillance air systems, where 68 percent of the air vehicles share common components.

This is a logical step. Within the Air Force, for example, UAS have evolved from the Predator as an EO/IR and full-motion video sensor platform to the Reaper, incorporating a variety of weapons: Hellfire missiles, GBU-12 laser-guided bombs, GBU-38 GPS-aided bombs, and the AIM-9 air-to-air missile. In this manner, the Reaper has broken barriers between the Air Force mission areas of ISR, close air support, and air superiority.

As force planners and acquisition authorities look to the next generation of air combat vehicles, UMS offer the chance to further overcome artificial barriers between joint mission areas and Service acquisition programs. For instance, what are the opportunities with the Navy's unmanned combat air system, the Air Force's Next Generation Bomber, and a future ISR and command and control platform? Recognizing joint UMS as an opportunity to field more interoperable weapons systems would allow acquisition communities to accentuate the commonality of the capabilities.

Thus, rather than discuss whether the F-35 is the last manned aircraft, an alternative mindset would be to approach the next air vehicle the Services acquire as the first joint combat air vehicle—where up to 90 percent of the components might be common to all Services' vehicles.

UMS must overcome more cultural than technical barriers to capitalize on these opportunities. Perhaps the greatest challenge will be creating a culture that accepts unmanned capability and respects those who operate it. Progress can be made in this area when all realize that unmanned systems will not remove the Soldier, Sailor, Marine, or Airman from combat. Retired Air Force Lieutenant General Dan Leaf predicts that in the future, we will have "a mix

of manned and unmanned platforms that ensures we will have a human stake in the lethal business of war."<sup>16</sup>

The unmanned system contribution to the joint force is increasing as these systems are no longer niche capabilities used for dull, dangerous, or dirty missions, as the radio plane or unmanned bomber were in the 1940s. Integrating UMS into the joint force allows them to accomplish more missions with greater savings of scarce resources, such as dollars and personnel. In the future, joint command and control, sense and avoid, and acquisition programs will increase the value of UMS to the joint team. Improved effectiveness and efficiency are possible only when viewed as integral with and complementary to the joint force. **JFQ**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> John T. Bennett, "Last Manned U.S. Tactical Plane? Not Yet," *Defense News*, December 7, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), *FY2009–2037 Unmanned Systems Integrated Roadmap*, April 2009, 4.

<sup>3</sup> OSD, *Unmanned Systems Roadmap: 2007–2032*, December 10, 2007, 19.

<sup>4</sup> OSD, *FY2009–2037*, xiii.

<sup>5</sup> Interview of Lieutenant General David Deptula, USAF, in *Defense News*, January 12, 2009, available at <[www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=3896251](http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=3896251)>.

<sup>6</sup> OSD, *FY2009–2037*, xiii.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 119, 121, 125, 133.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>9</sup> "Cost of the Force," *Air Force Magazine*, April 2009, available at <[www.airforce-magazine.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2009/April%202009/0409cost.aspx](http://www.airforce-magazine.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2009/April%202009/0409cost.aspx)>.

<sup>10</sup> For analysis purposes, a flotilla of 20 ships could be expected to have 5 ships in port/off-station on any given day.

<sup>11</sup> OSD, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Memorandum, "Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Ground Control Station (GCS) Acquisition Decision Memorandum (ADM)," February 11, 2009.

<sup>12</sup> OSD, *FY2009–2037*, 29.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 49.

<sup>16</sup> Author interview of Lieutenant General Dan Leaf, USAF (Ret.), September 23, 2009.



**NEW**  
from **NDU Press**

for the  
**Institute for National Strategic Studies**



## Strategic Forum 254

*U.S.-Mexico Homeland Defense:  
A Compatible Interface*

General Victor E. Renuart, Jr., USAF, Commander of U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), and Dr. Biff Baker take issue with Strategic Forum 243 (July 2009) entitled *U.S.-Mexico Defense Relations: An Incompatible Interface*. The authors argue that the bond between the American and Mexican people has been historically strong and has grown closer over time. They cite the North American Free Trade Agreement, Mexican military help after Hurricane Katrina, and the Merida Initiative as evidence of expanding trust between the countries. They conclude that increased cooperation between Mexico and USNORTHCOM and the U.S. interagency community on the northern side of the border will improve the security and prosperity of both nations.

## Strategic Forum 253

*Strengthening the IAEA: How the Nuclear  
Watchdog Can Regain Its Bark*

Ambassador Gregory L. Schulte, former U.S. Permanent Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), examines the recent history of the United Nations nuclear "watchdog" agency. He describes how stalled and politicized investigations of Iran and Syria have put the agency's credibility at risk. By strengthening the agency's verification capability, the IAEA can help shape the global growth of nuclear power, ensuring safety and security while discouraging the spread of sensitive technologies. The author calls on the new Director General to remove the politics from IAEA business and return the agency to its technical mandate.

Visit the NDU Press Web site  
for more information on publications  
at [ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu)

# Are We Professionals?

By KEVIN M. BOND

In recent years, there has been growing interest within the U.S. Army in identifying, defining, categorizing, promoting, and developing professionalism in all members of the military. This interest is laudable and receives support from both within and outside. As the U.S. Army confronts the changing modes of modern warfare, it faces several challenges as it seeks to increase military professionalism. These include the need to promulgate professional military identity throughout the force, promote a coherent view of a professional military ethic, and provide a sustained program for character development that allows officers and enlisted members to meet today's ever-changing environment. As irregular warfare

becomes more prevalent through persistent, evolving, never-ending conflict, official and unofficial doctrines that define professionalism and provide clear guidelines for it will benefit the U.S. Army. In this article, I examine how the U.S. Army, the military in general, and society as a whole view the professional status of Soldiers.

Army doctrine is often promulgated through Army Field Manuals (FMs). FM 1, *The Army*, claims that "a final aspect that distinguishes the American profession of arms is the professionalism of its officers and noncommissioned officers."<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, this implies that some of the enlisted ranks, E-1 through E-4, are not known for their professionalism. Yet according to FM 6-22, *Army Leadership: Competent, Confident,*

*and Agile*, Army leaders are encouraged to promulgate "The Soldier's Creed" as both the "Warrior Ethos" and "the professional attitudes and beliefs that characterize the American Soldier."<sup>2</sup> The Warrior Ethos includes the phrase, "I am an expert and I am a professional."<sup>3</sup> When presented with doctrine or guidance that may appear contradictory, as the above example may show (as well as a careful consideration of the "Seven Army Values"), Soldiers at any level of the Army risk uncertainty of their professional identity. Moreover, without a clear professional military identity, a coherent, visible, and accessible view of professional military ethics, and sustained character development programs, it becomes questionable whether all Soldiers really are professionals.



## Army Doctrine and Attitudes

Contemporary doctrine and philosophy regarding U.S. Army professionalism stands upon Samuel P. Huntington's seminal work *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*.<sup>4</sup> Civil and military interests come into conflict in a classically liberal society due to tension between the needs of security and the needs of individual liberty. Although all citizens may experience this conflict, it is citizen-soldiers who are often charged with the responsibility of maintaining the balance between the two. A critical reading of Huntington's work suggests that the success or failure of maintaining this balance depends on an "officership" that is a profession. One of Huntington's legacies derives from his claims that military *officers* are professionals.

Following common notions of professionalism, Huntington identifies a profession as "a peculiar type of functional group with highly specialized characteristics," which he identifies as "expertise, responsibility, and corporateness."<sup>5</sup> Professionals are experts with social responsibilities, such as physicians or lawyers, who have specialized knowledge and skills acquired through prolonged education and experience.<sup>6</sup> Professional knowledge is intellectual in nature, as "the professional man can successfully apply his skill only when he is aware of this broader tradition of which he is a part. . . . Professional education consists of two phases: the first imparting a broad, liberal, cultural background, and the second imparting the specialized skills and knowledge of the profession."<sup>7</sup> Military officers are professional, according to Huntington, insofar as their activities approach the professional level of applying their specialized skills and professional knowledge ("the management of violence") for the essential functioning of society.<sup>8</sup>

Huntington also claims:

*The enlisted men subordinate to the officer corps are a part of the organizational bureaucracy but not of the professional bureaucracy. The enlisted personnel have neither the intellectual skills nor the professional responsibility of the officer. They are specialists in the application of violence not the management of violence. Their vocation is a trade not a profession . . . the education and training necessary*

*for officership are normally incompatible with prolonged service as an enlisted man.*<sup>9</sup>

It is at this point that contemporary Army doctrine diverges from its roots in Huntington's analysis. Contemporary doctrine suggests that all members of the military should be considered, and should act as, professionals. In the Army's capstone document FM 1, previous Chief of Staff of the Army, Peter J. Schoomaker, states that central to the discussion of what it means to be a professional Soldier is the discussion of the Soldier's Creed, Warrior Ethos, and Army Values.<sup>10</sup> The seriousness of professionalism within the Army is demonstrated in that the first chapter of FM 1 lays the foundation for "The Army and the Profession of Arms." The first figure in FM 1 establishes the core professional identity the Army seeks to instill in its Soldiers (see textbox).

The italicized portion of the Soldier's Creed is the "Warrior Ethos" as promulgated by the U.S. Army. Soldiers are asked to internalize the Warrior Ethos and live by the Soldier's Creed, while upholding the Seven Army Values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage.<sup>11</sup>

There is much to be admired in Huntington's claim that officers are professionals and in the Army's attempt to professionalize its force. Yet Huntington may overstate the professionalism of officers and miss the possibility for the professionalization of the enlisted ranks while, concurrently, current Army doctrine may overstate the professionalism of its junior officers and enlisted ranks.

## Understanding "Professionalism"

To understand challenges in the professionalization of the Army, we must first consider and understand the conventional features of professionalism. Traditionally, this understanding is accomplished by first identifying professionals and professions. This initially appears to be a relatively easy task. Popular accounts of professionalism suggest that "white-collar" workers such as physicians, lawyers, veterinarians, and teachers are professionals. Likewise, popular accounts of professionalism suggest that "blue-collar" workers such as janitors, lifeguards, factory workers, and sales clerks are not.

## The Soldier's Creed

I am an American Soldier.  
I am a Warrior and a member of a team.  
I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

*I will always place the mission first.  
I will never accept defeat.  
I will never quit.  
I will never leave a fallen comrade.*

I am disciplined physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my Warrior tasks and drills.

I will always maintain my arms, my equipment, and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.

Yet these popular accounts are not without controversy. Some activities, although they may not normally be associated with professional status, nonetheless include people characterized as professionals. Examples are professional musicians, professional athletes, professional poker players, or even people who compete in eating competitions "professionally." Furthermore, the literature of professionalism debates whether some jobs should properly be characterized as professional, such as paralegals, paramedics, nurses, or soldiers.

Nurses have somewhat successfully conducted a campaign to meet the standards of professionalism and to become recognized as professionals within the past 20–30 years. They have accomplished this through aggressive initiatives to establish codes of conduct, "professional" education, and social awareness and endorsement of their services as "professionals." The military, by comparison, has not been as successful at meeting the challenges of establishing professional criteria for all ranks and for promoting the recognition of the Soldier as a professional.

**Dr. Kevin M. Bond is an Operational Philosopher for X-Phi Solutions. Formerly, he was an Operations Research Analyst and Training Specialist in the Army Center of Excellence for the Professional Military Ethic at the United States Military Academy at West Point.**

To understand professionalism, it is necessary to extract its characteristics. There are two ways this is done: a mostly descriptive approach and a somewhat normative approach. The descriptive approach I will call *essentialism*, which relies on identifying the necessary conditions that must be obtained for an activity to qualify as a profession or that an individual must meet to be properly identified as a professional. The normative approach I will call *functionalism*,

*military officers are professional, according to Huntington, insofar as their activities approach the professional level of applying their specialized skills and professional knowledge for the essential functioning of society*

which relies on identifying the appropriate function or role of an activity as it relates to society's needs. Professional norms are then defined to ensure that these needs are met in morally appropriate ways. In either case, both essentialism and functionalism seek to answer two related questions for identifying professionalism: What characteristics are necessary for an activity to be considered a

profession, and what characteristics are necessary for a person to be considered a professional? After establishing the necessary characteristics of a profession and a professional, the final requirement of professionalism is for the individual, as well as society, to accept and acknowledge the profession as legitimate.

### Essentialism

As the name suggests, essentialism seeks to answer the previous questions by identifying the *essential* features of professionalism. To this end, Michael Bayles, Bernard Barber, and Lisa Newton offer overlapping accounts of essentialism.

According to Bayles, almost every author in professionalism literature identifies three necessary features that characterize professionals:

- a professional has acquired extensive training of a particular activity
- the activity of a professional emphasizes intellectual powers over physical ability
- the professional performs an activity that is an important service to society.<sup>12</sup>

Along with these essential characteristics, Bayles offers the following characteristics as common, but not necessary, to most professionals. They:

- are certified or licensed to practice
- organize special memberships to promote the interests of their profession
- are autonomous in their work.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, Bayles distinguishes between consulting and scholarly professions. Consulting professions traditionally provide a fee-for-service practice in a client-practitioner relationship in which the professional acts as an agent for a specific client. Scholarly professions tend to operate on a salary with either many clients or no personal clients. These distinctions further demarcate the essential features, as well as generate various ethical issues. Consulting professionals, according to Bayles, possess several salient features that present possible conflicts of interest between the professional and a liberal democratic society. They:

- provide services related to basic human needs
- have a virtual monopoly on the services they provide
- are not subject to much public control.

Barber and Newton have slightly different approaches to essentialism. Whereas Bayles offers a discrete view of professionalism, Barber favors a continuum of rating the relative degree of professionalism.<sup>14</sup> According to Barber, there are no absolute differences between professionals and non-professionals. Rather, there is a continuum between fully professional (doctors and lawyers), partly professional (paramedics and paralegals), and barely or not at all professional (garbage collectors and lifeguards).<sup>15</sup> The degree of professionalism depends on the degree of involvement with four features of professionalism:

- a high degree of generalized and systemic knowledge
- oriented toward public interest as opposed to self-interest
- self-control maintained through codes of ethics, membership in professional organizations, and training
- a system of monetary and honorary rewards of achievement that reflects the above.

These criteria, according to Barber, are used to classify professional activity in one of three ways. First, they may be used to compare two or more different professions. A doctor



Ceremonial sword is passed during senior leader course change of responsibility ceremony at Signal Corps Regimental NCO Academy

U.S. Army (Gary W. Freer)



is a different kind of professional than a lawyer. Second, they may be used to compare professionals within the same occupation. An experienced physician at a teaching hospital has a different degree of professionalism compared to a newly graduated medical student. And third, they can be used to evaluate with respect to differing criteria. When comparing two teachers at a high school, one may be more professional with respect to classroom teaching, but another may be more professional with respect to maintaining positive parent-teacher relationships.

Newton presents the most complex account of professionalism. First, she suggests that professionals themselves claim that there are two criteria (which, according to Newton, are individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions) that justify professionalism: they are maximally competent in a specific area of knowledge, and they are committed to the public good in that area.<sup>16</sup> Next, Newton identifies additional features that *some* professionals claim as justification for their professional status: professionals attend to the welfare and interests of their clients, sometimes at the expense of the public good, and they command large fees.

Together with the first two criteria, I characterize these four criteria as Newton's "internal" characteristics of a profession; that is, these are criteria that professionals often indicate as qualifications that identify professionals. In addition, Newton identifies what I refer to as "external" criteria—ones that involve the historical development of a profession or a description of those criteria that actually appear to exist in a modern profession. There are three external characteristics, any one of which is a necessary component of professionalism: practicing an activity to achieve excellence within that activity, practicing an activity for profit, and practicing an activity to benefit others.<sup>17</sup>

Although it is difficult to conclude exactly how the external characteristics relate to the internal characteristics, it appears that Newton is claiming that an activity is considered professional when it arises from one of the external criteria and conforms with, at a minimum, the first two internal criteria. This account seems to combine aspects of both Bayles's and Barber's view. There are conditions that must be met to qualify as professionalism. This is consistent with Bayles's discrete view. Once professionalism has been identified,

it may be evaluated as a continuum over a range of activity. This aspect is consistent with Barber's continuum view.

Taken together, the three accounts offered by Bayles, Barber, and Newton give a descriptive account of how to identify professionals and professions. One looks for combinations of the following features: providing an important service to either the public or individuals, containing a significant intellectual component, requiring extensive training, having a high degree of specific subject matter knowledge, being oriented toward community interests (not strictly self-serving), having a code of conduct or some instrument of self-regulation, containing rewards and prestige, being very competent, providing a public good, or caring for people in their charge.

---

*after establishing the  
characteristics of a profession  
and a professional, the  
final requirement is for the  
individual, as well as society,  
to acknowledge the profession  
as legitimate*

---

As useful as this list is, however, it is mostly a *descriptive* account of professionalism. Essentialism seems to lack a certain *normative* element of identifying specifically what professionals *ought* to do. To capture this normative dimension, I now turn to functionalism.

### Functionalism

Functionalism relies on defining professional *norms* that an activity, organization, or person must meet in order to earn the benefits and obligations of public recognition of being a professional. As the name suggests, functionalism strives to explain professionalism in terms of *function* within society.

David T. Ozar demarcates nine categories of professional obligation.<sup>18</sup> Like Bayles, Barber, and Newton, Ozar understands that there are features commonly associated with professionalism: a public oath, an ethical code, service to others, specialized knowledge, and special moral commitments. These features are, however, based on the collective profession's answers to nine categorical questions that define the norms of a profession:

- Who is (are) this profession's chief client(s)?
- What are the central values of this profession?
- What is the ideal relationship between a member of this profession and a client?
- What sacrifices are required of members of this profession, and in what respects do the obligations of this profession take priority over other morally relevant considerations affecting its members?
- What are the norms of competence for this profession?
- What is the ideal relationship between members of this profession and co-professionals?
- What is the ideal relationship between members of this profession and the larger community?
- What ought members of this profession do to make access to the profession's services available to everyone who needs them?
- What are members of this profession obligated to do to preserve the integrity of their commitment to its values and to educate others about them?<sup>19</sup>

Not every profession needs to answer these questions the same way; however, each profession must identify an acceptable range of answers. Professional norms are arrived at by a profession establishing an agreed-upon range of answers to the questions and society's sanctioning of these answers. Thus, for example, defense lawyers may serve very different clients than public works engineers; priests may value sacrifice, while advertising agents may value maximizing profit; and politicians may serve their constituents while minimizing the needs of voters outside of their own districts.

Common usage of the concepts surrounding essentialism and functionalism often seems to follow the convention that the essentialism approach identifies whether or not we are dealing with professionalism while the functionalism approach provides details about a particular profession or professional's ideals, practices, and behaviors. In the former case we are often dealing with more descriptive notions of professionalism, while in the latter we are often dealing with more normative elements. Yet this is not an established rule. Both essentialism and functionalism can be used to identify descriptive and normative features of professionalism.

## We Are Not Professionals—Yet

With this understanding of professionalism, it is possible to work through the aspects of essentialism to show how Huntington might overstate the professionalism of officers and overlook the possibility for the professionalization of the enlisted ranks while, concurrently, current Army doctrine might overstate the professionalism of its junior officers and enlisted ranks.

First, to what extent do Soldiers receive extensive training in a professional activity? Nonmilitary professionals typically receive extensive training and education in their field well before entering the ranks of professionals. To maintain their professional status, they continue a lifetime of refinement through continuing education, on-the-job training, professional conferences, and personal development. For example, the typical physician might spend 4 years earning a bachelor's degree, 3 years in medical school, then 4 to 7 years of on-the-job training (commonly called a residency) before really being "a doctor." Lawyers will average 4 years earning a bachelor's degree, then spend 3 years in law school before earning their *juris doctor* degree. Physicians and lawyers must pass licensure exams before being allowed to legally practice as professionals. In many cases, to maintain their licensure and practice, physicians and lawyers must maintain their professional development through participating in and earning continuing education units. How does this education process compare to that of the military? To some degree, senior officers, junior officers, and career Soldiers mirror this type of formal training, education, and development. Senior officers have earned educational degrees and continually receive training, education, and development related to their military duties. Like medical residents or junior legal associates, junior officers are also at the beginning of a long-term professional path of training, education, and development. I would also claim, possibly contra-Huntington, that "career" Servicemembers in the Army, or those serving for about 12 to 25 years, may accumulate similar extensive training, education, and development that warrant claims that they too are professional in this category.

However, there is a high turnover rate, with people of all ranks leaving the Service before or around the 12-year mark. Officers, in particular, who find themselves in the Army's "up-or-out" system of employment, experience an incentive for a high rate of

turnover. This seems to suggest two aspects of "de-professionalism" within the Army. First, there are institutional practices that, unlike other professions, tend to limit (if not discourage) increasing professionalism within the military occupation. Second, and perhaps more importantly, Soldiers may not always think of themselves as following a "professional calling" that is significantly a part of their identity. Rather, they perceive that they have trained for a job or trade—granted, an important job or trade—but not for a professional career.<sup>20</sup>

---

*once professionalism has been identified, it may be evaluated as a continuum over a range of activity*

---

Does a Soldier's job represent intellectual powers over physical ability? Not always. There is certainly a significant field of military science that requires study, knowledge, and wisdom to apply effectively. Yet it seems that a significant amount of work in the military is simply "grunt" work—important, necessary, and without which the military would fail. Nonetheless, driving, cooking, digging ditches, and pitching tents suggest something other than professional activities. However, these activities might be providing the foundations for a future professionalism. Certainly as Soldiers rise in the ranks, they acquire and use more intellectual powers than physical ability. It takes thought and consideration to issue orders or lead others, and to meet the needs of the Nation. In today's environment it also takes training, thought, and consideration for any Soldier to respond adequately to changing technology and social and cultural issues. However, when considering the Army as a whole, it is difficult to see how each and every Soldier currently meets the standard, structured, educational, and intellectual components of professionalism.

Do Soldiers provide an important service to society? When acting to shield and protect people from harm, the answer is yes. In this respect, every Soldier may be viewed as a professional.

Are Soldiers certified or licensed to practice their skills? If so, it seems to be unlike the certifications or licenses of other professionals. Soldiers might pass examinations, receive certificates, or otherwise earn the right to practice certain tasks within the military—

for example, tank driver, medical corpsman, marksmanship instructor, plumber, cook, or computer expert. Nevertheless, it does not appear that there are certifications or licenses to "defend," "fight," or "wage war" that are comparable to licenses to "practice medicine," "pass the bar," or "wire a house."<sup>21</sup>

Do members of the military organize special groups to promote their interests? Soldiers and civilians establish organizations such as the Association of the United States Army, Military Academy Graduates, and the Special Forces Association. Nevertheless, there do not seem to be organizations equivalent to the American Medical Association, the American Bar Association, the American Psychological Association, or other professional organizations that act to set standards for member knowledge and conduct. It appears that military organizations are not organized around professional or personal development of the people they represent.

Are Soldiers autonomous in their work? Most professions are not totally autonomous. Physicians, lawyers, and engineers must follow not only their own professional standards, but also local standards of conduct, guidelines, and laws. The potential power that professionals have, plus the ability to cause great harm to innocent people, is one reason professionals are licensed or certified before they can practice. Society will not grant individuals a legal monopoly to practice without assurances that professionals will perform their duties to at least minimum standards. (This is one reason why most professions have a clear code of ethics.) It is not clear that Soldiers are autonomous in their work even when compared to the restrictions of other professions. An emphasis on command structure, adherence to numerous policies, plans, and procedures, "following any and all legal orders," and control through the civil sector all contribute to a significant reduction in autonomy. Soldiers are acting in a more traditionally understood professional manner when they have autonomy of action in planning and carrying out orders or policies and must make individual judgments to assure successful missions.

From these observations, it appears clear that if we use the characteristics set forth by the essentialism approach to defining professionalism, Soldiers and the military do not meet all the traditional criteria used to establish a profession. In this limited sense, it is fair to claim that not all Soldiers are con-



sidered to be professionals—yet. However, the “all or nothing” account of professionalism is not how we should think about it. Barber’s views of professionalism on a continuum are much more appropriate to our experiences and understanding of many professionals and professions. Clearly, some Soldiers at every rank are exemplars in professionalism. Just as clearly, some Soldiers are in positions that lack certain characteristics of professionalism. They may not be lacking in professionalism because of anything inadequate or missing within them. Rather, the structure of military service—the way they are treated, trained, educated, and developed—prohibits many Soldiers from being considered professional.

The military is a vast organization of interrelated duties, responsibilities, functions, goals, and spheres of influence. Soldiers are classified into distinct ranks: “nonprofessionals” (E-1 through E-4), noncommissioned officers (E-5 through E-9), warrant officers (W-1 through W-5), and officers (O-1 through O-9). The various ranks have distinct ranges of expertise in military science and different levels of autonomy to act within their assigned sphere. Therefore, it is appropriate

to ask which of these groups is made up of professionals. Should only selected Soldiers be considered professionals? Should all Soldiers be required to meet certain standards of professionalism? How can military professionalism and ethics be defined within the complexities of the U.S. Army?

who may or may not subscribe to a particular code of ethics relevant to their subject matter expertise. For example, within the medical field, physicians might follow the American Medical Association’s code of ethics, nurses might follow the American Nursing Association’s code of ethics, and pharmacists might

---

*professional norms are arrived at by a profession establishing an agreed-upon range of answers to the questions and society’s sanctioning of these answers*

---

### Professional Military Ethics

Given that there are degrees of differences in professionalism within the ranks of Soldiers, the issue arises as to whether there is one professional military code of ethics or several. The most popular view seems to be that there is one—“*The Professional Military Ethic*.” Once again, when compared to other professions, this seems a departure from traditional notions of professional ethics. There is no universal “*The Professional Medical Ethic*,” no “*The Professional Legal Ethic*,” and no “*The Professional Engineering Ethic*.” Each field is comprised of various practitioners

follow the American Pharmacists Association’s Code of Ethics for Pharmacists.

There simply is not (which is not to say there cannot be or never will be) a field of practice that can claim that all of its members are professionals and these professionals follow “*The Professional (insert profession here) Ethic*.” Moreover, even considering traditional fields of practice, such as medicine, law, or engineering, not every member of that field has a code of ethics. If there is no overarching “*The Professional Medical Ethic*,” “*The Professional Legal Ethic*,” or “*The Professional Engineering Ethic*,” why



Soldier reviews shot group during NCO of the Year competition

U.S. Army (Markus Rauchenberger)

would we assume that there is only one “The Professional Military Ethic” for everyone in the military? Until we understand what makes up professionalism within the military, which Soldiers are to be considered professional, and to what degree they are professional, reference to “The Professional Military Ethic” may be premature. Until we are able to understand and justify the need for “The Professional Military Ethic,” we might want to reconsider the idea that only one ethic has to exist.

It does a disservice to the very ideals of professionalism, and what it means to be a professional, to declare that by virtue of membership in an organization a person is a professional. More importantly, declaring that all Soldiers are professionals ignores the need to train, educate, and develop Soldiers both professionally and personally. By understanding professionalism as existing on a continuum, it is possible to focus on Soldiers at all levels as deserving the opportunity to grow and develop within their own spheres of authority and responsibility.

As the Army struggles with its changing role, it will need to strive to reach an understanding of professionalism as applied to Soldiers and to itself. Is there one professional military ethic or multiple ethics? Does a professional military ethic apply only to officers? Are officers the only Soldiers who should be held to professional standards? Or should all Soldiers be committed to professional standards and functions utilizing specific professional ethics appropriate to their duties?

To help answer these considerations, we can reconceptualize Ozar’s nine questions as they apply specifically to the Army:

- Who are the Army’s chief clients?
- What are the central values held by the Army?
- What is the ideal relationship between Soldiers and their clients?
- What sacrifices are required of Soldiers, and in what respects do the obligations of this profession take priority over other morally relevant considerations affecting Soldiers?
- What are the norms of competence for this profession?
- What is the ideal relationship between Soldiers and co-professionals?
- What is the ideal relationship between Soldiers and the larger community?

■ What should Soldiers do to make access to the profession’s services available to everyone who needs them?

■ What are Soldiers obligated to do to preserve the integrity of their commitment to the profession’s values and to educate others about them?<sup>22</sup>

As the Army answers these questions, it can better develop initiatives to establish codes of conduct and professional education within the military that allow it to more fully meet standards of professionalism. By identifying and achieving professional standards, the Army can campaign to develop social awareness and encourage endorsement of the Army’s unique service to our country, an endorsement that recognizes the professionalism of the U.S. Soldier. **JFQ**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 1, *The Army*, 46.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Army FM 6–22, *Army Leadership: Competent, Confident, and Agile*, 4–47.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 4–48.

<sup>4</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 7–8.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 17–18.

<sup>10</sup> FM 1, Foreword.

<sup>11</sup> One set of issues that needs to be addressed in future discussions of military professionalism is whether it is possible for Soldiers to internalize the Warrior Ethos and Seven Army Values. Readers interested in potential problems with the Warrior Ethos should read Timothy L. Challans’s *Awakening Warrior: Revolution in the Ethics of Warfare*. By carefully considering how the U.S. Army defines the Seven Army Values, it becomes apparent how difficult it is to apply the values in situations where either values conflict (for example, a Soldier’s loyalty to his comrades interferes with his duty to the chain of command) or applications of a value conflict with itself (for example, when duties conflict). Psychological “short-circuits” resulting from incoherent ethos or conflicting values go beyond the scope of this article. Instead, I focus on understanding professionalism writ large.

<sup>12</sup> Michael D. Bayles, *Professional Ethics* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1981), 7. Note that this follows Huntington’s concept of professionalism.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>14</sup> Discreteness, from the language of mathematics, describes objects that are individually distinct or noncontinuous. For example, when measuring time, continuous units are used because they can always measure smaller units of time, but when counting the number of people who arrive at a party, discrete numbers are used because one should not say, “Five and a half people came.” In the context of professionalism, then, if one suggests that either someone is professional or not, one is making a discrete claim. If one suggests that someone can be more or less professional, one is making a continuous claim.

<sup>15</sup> Bernard Barber, “Some Problems in the Sociology of the Professions,” *Daedalus* 92 (1963), 669. Examples listed here are my own.

<sup>16</sup> Lisa H. Newton, “Professionalization: The Intractable Plurality of Values,” in *Profits and Professions*, ed. Wade L. Robison et al. (Clifton, NJ: Humana Press, 1983), 49. Newton does not offer an account of what she means by “maximally competent.” My impression is that this is some standard of “above average” skill or ability, something that the average person would be unwilling or unable to accomplish.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>18</sup> David T. Ozar, “Profession and Professional Ethics,” in *Encyclopedia of Bioethics*, 3<sup>d</sup> ed., ed. Stephen G. Post, vol. 4 (New York: Macmillan Reference, 2004), 2158–2169.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> While guest lecturing for a philosophy class at the U.S. Military Academy, I asked the cadets, “Where will you be in 5 years and what will you be doing?” Only 1 cadet, in the small group of about 15, stated that he planned on still being in the Army. The rest planned on going into business, consulting, or other activities not necessarily related to their military service. This is almost the opposite reaction I receive when asking similar questions to pre-medical and pre-law students.

<sup>21</sup> According to a report by Russell Carollo and Jeff Nesmith, “Special License for Doctors,” *Dayton Daily News*, October 8, 1997, at one time it was possible for individuals to be physicians in the military without passing any standard state medical license exam. According to this article, the Oklahoma State Medical Board would offer “Special Licenses” to medical workers granting them the right to practice medicine in the military, Indian clinics, mental hospitals, and prisons, but not to practice in civilian hospitals or clinics in Oklahoma.

<sup>22</sup> Ozar, 2158–2169.



# When Do We Teach the Basics?



U.S. Military Academy at West Point (Vincent Fusco)

West Point senior NCO speaks to cadets about NCO role

By DONALD E. VANDERGRIFF

*We have to develop leaders who understand that context matters. The complexity of today's challenges and the uncertainties of tomorrow require a much broader approach to leader development and a clear understanding of the operating environment.*

—General Martin E. Dempsey  
Commander, Army Training and Doctrine Command  
October 2009<sup>1</sup>

For the first time since the founding of the Republic, there is no way to tell what the U.S. Army—for that matter, the entire military—will be used for, and therefore what it should be trained for. For that reason, the late Colonel John R. Boyd, USAF, may turn out to be the most influential strategist of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. But Boyd's work reaches beyond strategy. It is also influencing how the U.S. Army and Marine Corps are beginning to develop leaders, Soldiers, and Marines, focusing on strength of character and adaptability.<sup>2</sup> While Marines are already familiar with Boyd, Soldiers are beginning to know him primarily through the Observe, Orient, Decide, and Act ("OODA loop") concept and from his influence on maneuver warfare. As a result, the Army is taking on and evolving a new approach to training and education called Outcomes-based Training and Education (OBT&E) while developing a new teaching method under the umbrella of OBT&E called the Adaptive Leaders Methodology (ALM).<sup>3</sup>

## The OODA Loop

Fundamental to applying Boyd's concepts is the realization that the *OODA loop* isn't really a loop at all. Boyd, in fact, never drew it that way. Instead, the loop is more appropriately considered as a way of thinking about conflict based on the concept of keeping our orientations better matched to reality than our opponents can. Boyd demonstrated, by combining examples from both military history and modern science, that the side that can do that not only can respond to changes

more quickly, but also can shape the situation to its liking, and then exploit the advantage before the opponent can react. Another key is to use training and experience to assemble an arsenal of potentially effective actions that will flow intuitively, smoothly, and quickly from orientation. The end result is, as Boyd described it, to "operate inside an opponent's OODA 'loop'" and thus produce rapid, jarring changes that disorient and demoralize the opposition.<sup>4</sup>

Boyd demonstrated the power of making sound and timely decisions in his theory of decisionmaking. He contended that human behavior follows a specific four-step decisionmaking cycle of observation, orientation, decision, and action—what he called the OODA loop. The party that can execute this decisionmaking process more rapidly and effectively will gain an advantage because the opponent will constantly be reacting to his decisions. These continued reactions eventually result in poor enemy decisions followed by paralysis of the entire decisionmaking process. The common expression for this procedure is *getting inside the enemy's decision cycle*.<sup>5</sup>

The OODA loop is also known as the Boyd Cycle. Boyd developed it based on his observations of jet fighter combat over Korea and through years of intense study of why humans react the way they do and why they make certain decisions in combat. The OODA loop uses the cognitive skills that quantify the situational decisionmaking process in tangible terms. It transitions decisionmaking theory into a simplistic and useful approach to teach and improve decisionmaking.

The critical step in the OODA loop is *orientation*, where analysis and synthesis of the observations occur. This process consists of taking many disparate nuggets of data and translating them into a mental picture the decisionmaker can then use to make a choice. Boyd describes this as an "examining of the world from a number of perspectives so that we can generate mental images or impressions that correspond to the world."

The loop gains its power from the leader's ability to form mental constructs. Timeliness and accuracy of decisions and actions relate directly to the decisionmaker's ability to orient and reorient to rapidly changing and uncertain situations. Personal experiences, education, and training (also known as knowledge) empower the leader to form these mental constructs. Boyd's theory thus emphasizes the importance of the leader's ability to think.

By-the-book answers to specific well-known situations are not good enough. It is the ability to think that allows a leader to take the knowledge from personal experiences, education, and training and adapt it to the imperfect information of the present situation to arrive at a timely, sound, and workable solution.

Applying the OODA loop faster than the opposition is the essence of situational, or intuitive, decisionmaking. It is the means of quantifying a mental process into

---

Major Donald E. Vandergriff, USA (Ret.), is a contractor in support of Army Capabilities Integration Center Forward.

a mechanistic action that all Soldiers can understand and apply. Decisionmaking superiority is merely creating a tactical decision-making base in the operating environment.

While it is necessary to understand the OODA loop, the theory should not be introduced as a model or diagram by name until later in the formal education phase of the adaptive leader's course. In fact, unless a student makes a direct reference to the process during a discussion, or uses a theory to demonstrate what he has just done, theories

in decisionmaking or leadership should not be presented as part of experiential learning until the latter half of an adaptive leader's course. That way, the student can *experience* it before *naming* it.

The OODA loop serves as the centerpiece of how an adaptive leader makes decisions. Unlike the Army's Military Decisionmaking Process—a linear and analytical decisionmaking approach—the OODA loop provides a guide to how to think faster and more effectively than the enemy. However, it

is a guide and not a process. Students should first be guided through many scenarios to discover the loop on their own. When finally introduced to the formal theory, students will say, "Wow, that is what I was doing!"

A specific area of emphasis for instructors is examining how students use the information at their disposal to make decisions. Can they distinguish between pertinent and irrelevant information? Can they do it quickly? Can they then translate why that information is important and determine how to use it?

According to Major Chad Foster, Military Science 300 Course Director at the Department of Military Instruction (DMI) at the United States Military Academy (USMA), West Point, where ALM is being applied as part of OBT&E:

*timeliness and accuracy of decisions and actions relate directly to the decisionmaker's ability to orient and reorient to rapidly changing and uncertain situations*



Infantry officer candidate trains in combat water survival

*At the heart of ALM is the essence of the Boyd Cycle, a 4-step theory of decisionmaking that was first articulated by Col. John R. Boyd following his study of fighter pilots in combat during the Korean War. . . . Commonly known as "OODA" (observation, orientation, decision, action), the Boyd Cycle is a useful framework for the assessment of students throughout the course. We focus on the critical step of "orientation" because this is where the cadet attempted to make sense out of the information at hand. The decision that the cadet makes is important, but how they arrived at that decision is just as important.<sup>6</sup>*

### **Educating and Training = Development**

The reason for recommending Boyd to those who must deal with the strangeness of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the equally strange fact that Boyd was not primarily concerned with warfare. Although he is recognized as a father of maneuver warfare, nowhere in the pages he left did he use the term. He would certainly have agreed with both Sun Tzu and Clausewitz that warfare must serve a higher purpose or it is just brutal savagery. So throughout his work, he emphasized destruction *and* creation, coercion *and* attraction, chaos *and* harmony, isolation *and* interaction. These principles apply to the rifle squad just as they do to national policy. That is actually what General Dempsey's opening statement implies: OBT&E is the evolving approach to developing leaders who have the strength of character to make rapid decisions based on their understanding of the commander's intent beyond the traditional two levels up.<sup>7</sup>

U.S. Army (Kenneth R. Toole)

The Army acknowledges the need for change. We have begun an evolution in the way we develop—train, educate, access, promote, and select—leaders and Soldiers. We are specifically concerned with how we evolve adaptability. To clarify the Army's training doctrine, the recently published Field Manual 7-0, *Training for Full Spectrum Operations*, states:

*Traditional training and education may not meet all the needs of an expeditionary Army; as appropriate, training and education must adapt to the needs of a new operational environment. . . . For example, Outcome-Based Training and Education is supposed to develop individuals and organizations that can think and operate in complex environments. . . . The focus is on the total outcome of a task or event rather than on the execution of a particular task to a standard under a given set of conditions. Given operational expectations, it is supposed to develop tangible skills such as marksmanship and intangible attributes such as creativity and judgment.<sup>8</sup>*

The Competency Theory of learning once dominated course curriculums, and signs of it remain in leader development today. The theory is a product of the industrial age outlook that once necessarily governed the way our military prepared for war. This assembly-line mentality made sense when we relied on a massed citizen army made up of draftees, but the disadvantage was that it emphasized inputs (hours, resources, people trained, and so forth) more than individual quality of the product. Order and control are central to Programs of Instruction (POIs) that use the competency theory as its foundation.<sup>9</sup>

Leader development for the full spectrum of 21<sup>st</sup>-century military operations must at every grade level be based on quality, not quantity. The rule should be, "Soldiers deserve and require trained leaders." Schools and courses employing OBT&E principles guiding an ALM-based curriculum constantly put students in difficult, unexpected situations, and then require them to decide and act under time pressure. Schooling must take students out of their comfort zones. Stress—mental and moral as well as physical—must be constant. Wargames, tactical decision games, map exercises, and free-play field exercises must constitute the bulk of the curriculum.

But under OBT&E, the emphasis is on growing the decisionmaker by explaining the *why* behind the task and teaching in the context of a problem-solving exercise. Higher command levels overseeing officer and non-commissioned officer (NCO) schools must look for courses adhering to a few principles, while allowing instructors to evolve their lesson plans using innovative teaching techniques and tools in an ever-changing environment. Leaders who successfully pass through the schools must continue to be developed by their commanders. Learning must not stop at the schoolhouse door.

---

### *Boyd emphasized destruction and creation, coercion and attraction, chaos and harmony, isolation and interaction*

---

The Army is currently assessing OBT&E as a training doctrine, which evolved out of the approach Colonel Casey Haskins and his 198<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade took at Fort Benning from 2006 to 2008 in developing new infantry Soldiers.<sup>10</sup> Put simply, OBT&E looks for results; it puts the burden of professionalism more on the shoulders of the student and lets the instructor decide how to get results, much like mission orders or mission tactics where the *how* to is left to those executing the mission with little or no oversight from higher up. OBT&E is best described as "developmental training"—development of the individual within the training of a military task. Students are held accountable for what they should already know and bring to the next course.<sup>11</sup>

OBT&E is the guiding philosophy from which ALM was developed as a way to teach and reach outcomes. In OBT&E, Army standards remain the baseline for training; however, they are no longer the primary or exclusive goal. ALM is used to apply the principles of OBT&E. It evolved from an effort to develop cadets to be better decisionmakers and leaders of character at Georgetown University Reserve Officers' Training Corps between 1999 and 2005. ALM uses situational exercises in a tactical environment to develop professionalism, decisionmaking skills, and ultimately strength of character. The methodology used by the instructor is similar.<sup>12</sup>

At a U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC)-hosted workshop

in August 2006, Dr. Robert Bjork, Dean of the School of Psychology at the University of California at Los Angeles, presented "How We Learn Versus How We Think We Learn: Implications for the Organization of Army Training." He emphasized:

*When instruction occurs under conditions that are constant and predictable, learning appears to get what we might call contextualized. It looks very good in that context, but doesn't support retention later when tested in other contexts and the learning acquired in the original context does not transfer well to different contexts. In contrast, varying conditions of practice, even just the place where you study, for example, can enhance recall on a later test. If when trying to learn several things, you intertwine the learning of those things in such a way as to cause interference among them during learning, long-term performance on them will be enhanced. Massing (such as cramming for exams) supports short-term performance; whereas spacing (distributing presentations, study attempts, training trials, etc.) supports long-term retention.<sup>13</sup>*

Bjork's work, as it relates to the current task-centric or input approach to Army education, can be summed up in the following two statements:

- conditions of instruction that make performance improve rapidly often fail to support long-term retention and transfer  
*whereas*
- conditions of instruction that appear to create difficulties for the learner, slowing the rate of *apparent* learning, often optimize long-term retention and transfer.

ALM under the guiding OBT&E principles exposes students to classical education in conjunction with existing leadership programs on campuses where they are taught to find the answers, whereas "competency based" curriculum as described earlier gives students the answers. Instead, if the students are exposed to an environment in which they want to find the answers for themselves, the lessons are emotionally marked in time, which builds intuition—a necessary trait of "adaptive leaders." This approach in ALM immerses students in education and training with innovative teachers combining the terms *education* and *training* into development.



According to Major Foster:

*In my opinion, the implementation of key elements of ALM has been the best thing to happen to our Military Science program during my time here as an instructor. After seeing this new methodology of teaching applied to our courses in tactical problem-solving and small unit tactics this semester, I am even more convinced of its value. In just a few weeks, I felt that I was able to get my cadets to a level beyond that which I was able to achieve over several months during previous semesters.<sup>14</sup>*

From February 2008 through December 2009, the demand for information on OBT&E and ALM was intensified. Requests for the workshop “Deciding under Pressure and Fast” that teaches ALM increased as well. Since January 2008, ALM and the workshop have

from September 2008 to September 2009, the Army Fires Center of Excellence at Fort Sill, on October 3, 2009, made it a policy that all training and education use OBT&E and ALM.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, Fort Knox has implemented OBT&E and ALM completely in its Army Reconnaissance Course (ARC), gaining “buy-in” from students and cadre after its first pilot course in March 2009.<sup>16</sup>

Many other institutions within the Army, including leader-centric courses such as ones at the Noncommissioned Officers Academy (NCOA) at Fort Benning, are starting to use ALM in their POI and lesson plans. As Command Sergeant Major Zoltan James, Commandant of the NCOA at Fort Benning, explains:

*ALM has outlined and changed the way we teach at Ft. Benning’s NCO Academy by giving us the ability to develop NCOs who think for*

Army’s future leaders. According to Captain Thomas Pike, Course Director for Military Intelligence Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC) III:

*Adaptive Leader Methodology has had a paradigm shifting impact on the Military Intelligence Basic Officer Leader Course (MIBOLC). ALM has not only improved the way in which material is presented to the students; it has also changed the way in which instructors understand their material, dynamically changing MIBOLC’s training environment. ALM is what is needed to train junior intelligence officers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

Of significant note is that this “change” has required no additional resources or a lengthening in the total period of instruction. While the ALM takes advantage of combat veterans’ insights and experiences, it requires their continued initiative and desire to grow future leaders because it continues to build on Army core principles and values. The warrior ethos underpins everything in the ALM, while the methodology itself adapts the Army’s leaders to the current and future operating environment.

ALM is a cultural change rather than a specific set list of exercises. Pike calls it “a completely different mindset for the instructor.” ALM develops adaptability through the Rapid Decision Making (RDM) process, using the experiential learning model and scenario-based learning. According to Captain Casey Giese, BOLC II company commander, “ALM is a system that promotes self-actualized learning via weakly structured situational problems.” Captain Alec Barker, who applies ALM in his red teaming approach, says, “ALM espouses institutionalized inductive reasoning in order to prepare leaders for the complex wars of the future.”<sup>19</sup> At a course using ALM, according to Major Paul Wilcox, former BOLC II company commander:

*Students are quickly thrown into problem solving exercises that would be viewed in the past as too complicated for them without first learning the basics [from a classroom lecture]. They then review the results of their actions in an after action review (AAR) in which the instructors facilitate the students in finding their answers. The instructors avoid telling the students how to do it, there are no book solutions, but guide the students toward workable solutions they already discovered*

### *Adaptive Leaders Methodology uses situational exercises in a tactical environment to develop professionalism, decisionmaking skills, and ultimately strength of character*

been presented in San Diego, California (at the Joint Conference on Military Ethics); Fort Huachuca, Arizona; Fort Benning and Fort Gordon, Georgia; Fort Monroe, Virginia; Fort Knox, Kentucky; and USMA at West Point. Participating in the ALM workshop is the first step of incorporating the method into a course or program.

The U.S. Army Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG) has been pushing OBT&E throughout the Army in its Combat Application Training Course (CATC), which uses rifle marksmanship as a vehicle to show Army leaders how to teach OBT&E. AWG also used ALM in its incentives, and hosted its first Adaptability Conference on June 3–4, 2008. Day 1 focused on ALM’s workshop, while day 2 focused on OBT&E. AWG followed up with a larger conference in March 2009 that involved over 100 representatives from throughout the Army as well as U.S. military and government agencies. The TRADOC Capabilities Integration Center Forward continues to host the ALM workshops, recently at Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Fort Knox; Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri; and Fort Benning.

After frequent workshops that developed over 100 instructors, and having over 400 instructors participate in the AWG CATC

*themselves instead of current training outlines that provided them with a Task, Condition, and Standard. We have changed our training culture, adding the utilization of tactical decision games with no additional resources or increased Program of Instruction time. This new training tool allows our students attending Noncommissioned Office Education System (NCOES) [courses] to share their combat experiences with their peers and provides a training vehicle to develop and practice adaptability. Most importantly, they gain knowledge and understanding of how to deal effectively with a continually changing environment.<sup>17</sup>*

The issue before TRADOC is instituting a methodology that moves beyond the vision outlined by FM 7–0 and General Dempsey to a tangible method to instruct our leaders in “how to think” versus “what to think.” James continues, “Creating adaptability in our leaders attending NCOA is a huge challenge for the current methods available of training by the standard training support packets provided for NCOES classroom instructions by the Institutional Army.”<sup>18</sup>

The feedback of instructors and students involved with ALM reflects the positive impact this cultural change will have on the

in experimenting during the course of the scenario.<sup>20</sup>

Preferably, the instructors use force-on-force, free-play exercises whenever possible. In lieu of these capstone exercises, they use Tactical Decision Games, or as they are called at USMA's DMI, Tactical Decision Exercises (TDEs), as a tool to facilitate learning before ever introducing theory or doctrine. They may also use symposium-based case studies.<sup>21</sup> According to Sergeant First Class Robert Elzy, BOLC II Tactical NCO, the approach called for in the ALM POI "is more difficult because the instructors must stand back and let the students learn through doing, but also know when to step in to keep students on course without wasting too much time, as some student leaders will flounder in trying to lead and solve the problem." Major Foster adds:

*ALM works, but it takes the right kind of instructor. Gone are the days when you could just "plug-in" any officer or NCO into a teaching position. Teaching in a course that applies ALM requires a high level of passion and competence. It is tough for those who want to implement this methodology, but nothing worth having is ever easy. After seeing it first hand, I will apply the principles of ALM in everything that I do as a leader, trainer, and mentor during the rest of my Army career. I will also seek out subordinate leaders who understand this philosophy and can put it into practice.*

ALM teachers are concerned with why students do what they do—an action-learning approach. The emphasis is on ensuring that students gain and maintain a willingness to act. During numerous AARs and mentoring sessions—occurring during and after numerous scenarios with different conditions—the teacher will analyze why the students acted as they did and the effect their actions had on the overall operation. As Captain Walton, instructor at Infantry BOLC III, put it:

*I was skeptical at first of its [ALM's] utility for a number of reasons. We had to really bite our lips during the painful execution of very poor React to Contact Drills during the [exercises]. However, we noticed during the AAR we were no longer confronted with the statement, "But that's the way SSG Melander told me to do it." I was now able to ask leading questions during the AAR, i.e., "Why*

*did you assault back toward your [support-by-fire] position?" I found myself rather than in a position of convincing the lieutenants of a way to do it, and even of being confrontational at times in the AAR, the lieutenants now fully accepted and took ownership that they were not ready. I was now coaching, teaching, and mentoring on team, squad, and platoon leadership. The lieutenants then went back and conducted several hours of rehearsals and then executed a second iteration of the [exercise]. They performed the best set of [squad live-fire exercises] we've ever conducted.*<sup>22</sup>

The essence of the ALM is not to arrive at the school solution, or even to teach the students to go down a prescribed checklist of steps. For an era where we cannot predict



**Asymmetric Warfare Group senior NCO welcomes attendees to outcomes-based training and education integration workshop**

what leaders will be doing—or even if it should be called “war” at all—the checklist mentality is irrelevant at best. Instead, the method requires instructors to put students into increasingly complex and disorganized scenarios. A good scenario employing TDEs gives students a tactical problem and then puts them under stress—often a time constraint, but there are other means limited only by the instructor’s imagination. The students must not only present their solutions, but also explain why they did what they did. The instructor and the other students will critique the solution as well as the explanation and the technique for solving the problem. Did the students, for example, use an effective balance of written and verbal instructions? Why did they micromanage their NCOs? Did the local population think better of the coalition as a result, or did the “favorable” body count just help recruit more insurgents?

The impact of the training can be magnified by combining TDEs with the study of military history (the best TDEs are based on historical examples) and intensive field work that includes free-play exercises. To be most effective, these teaching approaches must take place under the cultural umbrella of what is called a “learning organization.” In contrast, today’s approach to developing leaders is still focused on top-down memorization of process, which is not going to help future leaders achieve mastery of Boyd-type principles. As Command Sergeant Major James remarks, as a result of using ALM, “We have a better trained and developed NCO corps [who have] become critical thinkers and can adapt to a changing operating environment to support senior leaders’ mission requirements.”<sup>23</sup>

*the issue before TRADOC is instituting a tangible method to instruct our leaders in “how to think” versus “what to think”*

### Evolution Must Continue

So how do we create strategic corporals, strategic lieutenants, strategic majors, and strategic colonels? The trick is to instill a culture like the one embodied in the Army’s new TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-0, *The Army Capstone Concept Operational Adaptability—Operating Under Conditions of Uncertainty and Complexity in an Era of Persistent Conflict*. Boyd once called such a culture the “Principles of the Blitzkrieg,” but dropped that description in favor of “an operational climate for organizational success.” The essence of this approach is to ensure that we lead through *Auftragstaktik*, a German term implying that once everyone understands the commander’s intent (two levels up), they are free to, and indeed duty-bound to, use their creativity and initiative to accomplish their missions within the intent. In such an environment, teams will largely self-organize within the doctrinal framework to accomplish the mission.<sup>24</sup>

James concludes that “ALM has enhanced all my NCO Academy instructors’ ability to plan and execute training at my NCOES courses that encapsulates the student’s ability to think for himself, giving him another tool for training his Soldiers

when they return to their units.”<sup>25</sup> The culture will become one that rewards leaders and Soldiers who act, and penalizes those who do not. Today’s culture needs to evolve so the greater burden rests on all superior officers, who have to nurture—teach, trust, support, and correct—the student, who because of his training now enters the force with the ability to adapt.

Although large-scale warfare among developed states is increasingly unlikely, conflict—the real subject of Boyd’s investigations—is eternal. The world population approached seven billion by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Competition for increasingly scarce resources will continue to make conflict,

---

*for an era where we cannot predict what leaders will be doing—or even if it should be called “war” at all—the checklist mentality is irrelevant*

---

including the use of large-scale armed force, ever more likely in the developing world. As Boyd insisted, resolving future conflicts so we do not again become bogged down in multi-year insurgencies will be a carrot-and-stick affair, where the emphasis is not so much on “unconditional surrender” or other 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century notions as on persuading people not to support dangerous groups. A component of this approach may be discrediting those who would use organized violence to achieve their ends.

When conflict with enemies becomes necessary, Boyd’s timeless concept of “operating inside their OODA loops” provides the mechanism for achieving resolution rapidly and with the minimum damage to our coalition and to friendly and uncommitted populations. Most importantly, as Major Foster concludes, “ALM creates leaders and Soldiers who can truly ‘think on their feet’ because they are forced to do so in every aspect of the course. I don’t think there is any other method or theory that could be better for developing leaders, especially those in the military.”<sup>26</sup> **JFQ**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Remarks by General Martin E. Dempsey, Commanding General, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), at the Association of the United States Army’s Chapter Presidents’ Dinner, Washington, DC, October 4, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Several of the principles as well as methodology are being put to practice at the U.S. Marine Corps Expeditionary Warfare School (EWS) at Quantico, VA. EWS is a captains’ course attended by all Services as well as allies.

<sup>3</sup> Discussions with Command Sergeant Major William “Morgan” Darwin, USA (Ret.), contributed to this article.

<sup>4</sup> Boyd’s magnum opus, *Patterns of Conflict*, ends not with the OODA loop and sowing deception, ambiguity, and chaos, but with the “Theme for Vitality and Growth.” In other words, our focus should always be on attracting people around the world to engage peacefully with us and our way of life, while we, in partnership with our allies, retain the capability to deal quickly and elegantly with those who would use force to gain their objectives. Available at <www.d-n-i.net/dni/>. Also based on discussions with Col Chet Richards, USAFR, and Franklin C. Spinney.

<sup>5</sup> I was fortunate to be mentored by many acolytes of John Boyd, particularly Franklin “Chuck” Spinney and Chet Richards. Also see <www.d-n-i.net/dni/> for a thorough examination of Boyd’s theories.

<sup>6</sup> Chad Foster, “No Approved Solutions in Asymmetric Warfare: Nurturing Leaders in an Outcomes Based Training Environment,” *Assembly* (August 2009), 14.

<sup>7</sup> Based on discussions with Dr. Chester Richards, November 2008.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Army Field Manual 7–0, *Training for Full Spectrum Operations* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Arms Center, December 12, 2008), para. 3–7.

<sup>9</sup> Donald E. Vandergriff, “Review of Army Training,” unpublished paper (Arlington, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, September 2006), 4–5.

<sup>10</sup> The Army made a smart move; COL Haskins is now Director of the United States Military Academy’s Department of Military Instruction tasked with developing all cadets in military science.

<sup>11</sup> CSM Morgan Darwin, USA (Ret.), provided this definition of OBT&E.

<sup>12</sup> Quotation provided by CSM Patrick Laidlaw, October 30, 2008.

<sup>13</sup> Dr. Robert Bjork, presentation at TRADOC-hosted workshop in August 2006, “How We Learn Versus How We Think We Learn: Implications for the Organization of Army Training,” 5.

<sup>14</sup> Quote provided by MAJ Chad Foster, October 25, 2008.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Army Accessions Command, “Basic Officer Leaders Course (BOLC) Policy and Guidance,” unpublished memorandum (Fort Monroe, VA: TRADOC, April 24, 2008), 4. Also see Headquarters U.S. Army Fires Center of Excellence, “The Way Ahead for Outcome Based Training and Education and the Adaptive Leaders Methodology at Fires Center of Excellence (Fort Sill, OK: U.S. Army Fires Center of Excellence, October 3, 2009).

<sup>16</sup> MAJ Robert Perry, USA, and LTC Kevin McEnery, USA (Ret.), “Army Reconnaissance Course: Defining the Aim Point for Reconnaissance Leader Training,” *Armor* (August 2009), 14.

<sup>17</sup> Quote provided by CSM Zoltan James, October 31, 2008.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Alec Barker, “Review of *Raising the Bar*,” unpublished book review (Reston, VA: April 2008).

<sup>20</sup> Based on discussions with MAJ Paul Wilcox, USA, September 16, 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Donald E. Vandergriff, “Swift to Swiss: Tactical Decision Games and Their Place in Military Education,” *Improved Performance Society Journal* (February 2006).

<sup>22</sup> Quote provided by CPT Andrew Watson, TAC Infantry BOLC III, with knowledge of LTC Lance “Duke” Davis, commander of 2/11 Infantry, Fort Benning, GA, October 25, 2008.

<sup>23</sup> James.

<sup>24</sup> LTG Walter Ulmer, USA, “Creating and Assessing Productive Organizational Climates,” course handout (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2002), 1.

<sup>25</sup> James.

<sup>26</sup> Foster.



# The Post-9/11 American Serviceman

By ADAM B. LOWTHER

Soon after the beginning of Operations *Enduring Freedom* (OEF) and *Iraqi Freedom* (OIF), the composition of the American military came under intense scrutiny. Pundits and talking heads were quick to go to the news media and suggest that the military is racist, sexist, and conspicuously lacking in wealthy whites whose fathers, they claimed, initiated our current conflicts.<sup>1</sup> Had these critics of the Nation's military examined recent research, they would have understood that much of what they were asserting is inaccurate. The facts present a different picture than what is often accepted as conventional wisdom.

This article examines demographic, personality typology, leadership psychology, and worldview literature to develop a composite sketch of the American Serviceman. Although incomplete, current research provides ample evidence to dispel many of the most egregious myths about the composition of the military. Providing a more accurate description of the Nation's fighting men and women is therefore the focus of this work.

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, scholars began to analyze the psychology, values, and demographic characteristics of the military. This analysis brought some startling insights. In the preface to *The Professional*

*Soldier* (1960), one of the earliest works on the subject, Morris Janowitz argued:

*The military face a crisis as a profession: How can it organize itself to meet its multiple functions of strategic deterrence, limited warfare, and enlarged politico-military responsibility? First, there is continuous technological change. Second, there is the necessity of redefining strategy, doctrine, and professional self-conceptions. Maintaining an effective organization while participating in emerging*

Dr. Adam B. Lowther is a Faculty Researcher and Defense Analyst at the Air Force Research Institute.



Army research psychologist briefs GEN Casey on resiliency training

Department of Defense (D. Myles Cullen)

*schemes, such as nuclear test controls or regional security arrangements, will require new conceptions and produce new tasks for the military profession.*<sup>2</sup>

These words still ring true five decades later. Despite unprecedented change in the international security environment, the profession of arms always appears to be in crisis. Perhaps Janowitz was wrong. In place of the ever-present “crisis” may be the professional soldier’s eternal adjustment to an ever-changing strategic environment. Whatever the case may be, Janowitz’s original question remains poignant.

In offering an alternative explanation of civil-military relations in the United States to the earlier work of Samuel Huntington’s *The Soldier and the State* (1957), Janowitz inaugurated what remains a hotly contested debate about the nature of the military within society and those characteristics that set it apart from the public it defends.<sup>3</sup> While there is some consensus that military members are substantively different from the broader society, there is little agreement on exactly how different and why.<sup>4</sup>

### Military Demographics

In the immediate aftermath of the Vietnam War, the United States ended the draft (1973) and moved to an all-volunteer force. Then, as today, critics of this force claimed that the military would draw recruits

from poor black neighborhoods, while allowing white elites to eschew military service.<sup>5</sup> Elite participation did decline, but the Nation’s military is not drawn from the urban poor. In fact, the demographic picture of the U.S. military is quite different.

**Household Income.** According to recent studies, recruits came from households with an average annual income of \$43,122 (1999 dollars), slightly above the national average of \$41,994.<sup>6</sup> As a percentage of the 18- to 24-year-old population, from which most recruits are drawn, average household incomes fell into two economic groups: \$35,000–\$79,999, and \$85,000–\$94,999.<sup>7</sup> These socioeconomic

*the percentage of recruits from high-income households has increased since 9/11 while the percentage from low-income households declined*

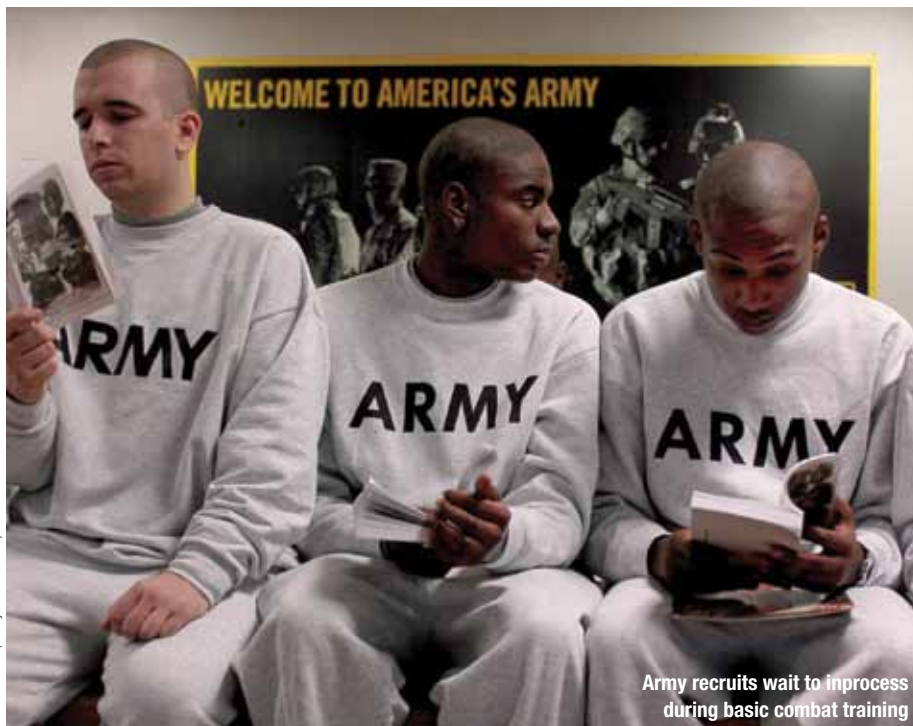
groups were overrepresented among recruits while families in the highest and lowest socioeconomic groups were underrepresented.<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, the percentage of recruits from high-income households has increased since 9/11 while the percentage from low-income households declined.<sup>9</sup> In 2005, 22.8 percent of recruits came from the richest quintile, while only 13.7 percent came from the poorest. Thus, the average enlistee is drawn from

the middle class, not the urban poor. Data were not available for incoming officers and military academy accessions. Socioeconomic status also correlates to other desirable variables such as work ethic, intelligence, and aptitude, which are discussed below.<sup>10</sup>

**Education.** On average, the military is better educated than the rest of society.<sup>11</sup> Ninety-eight percent of military members hold at least a high school diploma, while the national average is 75 percent.<sup>12</sup> Enlistees and officers also score above the national average in standardized reading and math tests. Interestingly, Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)/Armed Force Quotient Test scores demonstrate that today’s enlistees are more intelligent than enlistees before 9/11.<sup>13</sup> In addition, veterans enrolled in college maintain a grade point average above the mean.<sup>14</sup> Thus, those who suggest that the military has lowered its standard to meet recruiting needs are incorrect. The opposite has occurred. Americans who choose to enlist or take commissions in the military are better educated and more intelligent today than at any time since the collection of data began.

**Race.** In 2004, 75.6 percent of the adult population in the United States considered itself Caucasian. In 2006, 77.99 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds in the United States described themselves as Caucasian.<sup>15</sup> Of the recruits (enlisted) entering the military in 2004, 73.1 percent were Caucasian. Moreover, 75.43 percent of all Active-duty Servicemembers between the ages of 18 and 24 identified themselves as Caucasian.<sup>16</sup> Thus, there is an almost 1 to 1 ratio of whites within society and the military. When broken into the subsets of white non-Hispanic (84.57 percent) and white Hispanic (15.43 percent), Hispanics represent just under 10 percent of the total force—a slight underrepresentation.<sup>17</sup>

Blacks and Asians have the highest and lowest levels of representation—proportionally—in the U.S. military. Contrary to popular belief, in the years following the draft, blacks increasingly joined the military because of the fair treatment it is perceived to offer. By 1990, they made up about 20 percent of the military while accounting for only 13 percent of the population. Seen as an egalitarian institution where skin color did not inhibit advancement, black enlistees and officers joined the military and self-selected to serve primarily in administrative, supply, and support roles.<sup>18</sup> But in the years since 9/11, black participation in the



Army recruits wait to inprocess during basic combat training

U.S. Air Force (Micky M. Bazaldua)

military has declined, although it remains around 15 percent.<sup>19</sup>

Evidence suggests that the black decline is a result of several factors. First, the rationale for joining the military is largely related to the open nature of military culture and the opportunities it provides. As the Government Accountability Office notes, “Historically, many African Americans enlisted for tangible reasons and were more likely than white or Hispanic enlisted personnel to be in noncombat occupations and make a career of the military.”<sup>20</sup> When viewed as an avenue for advancement, the military is less attractive during time of war and high operational

*the view that the urban poor are the Nation’s warfighters is unsubstantiated, although it is correct to suggest that “small towns pay a big price”*

tempo.<sup>21</sup> Second, the unpopular nature of the Iraq War and the strong affinity of African-Americans for the Democratic Party may also help to explain why black recruitment declined after 9/11.

Asians, on the other hand, are given limited attention in the demographic literature.<sup>22</sup> Why Asians are underrepresented is not well known. Thus, it must suffice to say that Asians make up 3.6 percent of the military and 4.8 percent of the general population.<sup>23</sup>

**Region.** Equally important to the variables described thus far is geographic region. Among the four examined (Northeast, Midwest, South, and West), the South and West account for 65 percent of all recruits, with the South accounting for 42 percent.<sup>24</sup> Although the Northeast and Midwest account for 41 percent of the population (ages 18–24), 35 percent of recruits were drawn from these regions.<sup>25</sup> Research confirms the common belief that there is a strong “Southern military tradition,” although Southerners do not dominate the leadership of the military as completely as they did early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Gender.** Historically, the military is a bastion of masculinity. But wars have frequently provided women the opportunity to serve, for example, in the Women’s Air Corps and as nurses, secretaries, and clerks. The military began to open its ranks after World War II. The number of women in the military doubled from 1980 to 2003, rising from 8.4 to 15 percent.<sup>26</sup> While this is certainly

disproportionately low—women are slightly more than half the population—there is little effort to equalize the ratio of men and women in the military. Moreover, with few exceptions (combat arms), women are now serving in most career fields.

The most recent data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics offer an additional point of interest related to gender: Of the applicants for Active enlistment in the four Services (Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force), a higher percentage of females score in the “Tier I” category on the ASVAB than males. Simply stated, on average, females in the military are smarter than their male counterparts.

**Population Density.** One final variable offers substantive demographic explanatory power. Over 71 percent of recruits in 2003 came from suburban and rural areas. Urban areas, which account for 40 percent of the population (ages 18–24), account for less than 29 percent of the military.<sup>27</sup> Rural areas are the most overrepresented proportionally. Thus, the view that the urban poor are the Nation’s warfighters is unsubstantiated, although it is correct to suggest that “small towns pay a big price.”<sup>28</sup>

If a composite sketch of the average Servicemember were drawn, *he* would be a white high school graduate from a middle-class family in the suburbs or exurbs somewhere in the South or West. Again, this

is based on statistical averages, not on any single slice of the military, which may offer a very different picture.

Before turning to the recent literature on personality typology and military leadership psychology, a look at self-selection in the all-volunteer force is relevant to the broader discussion. Not only does an all-volunteer force attract certain personality types, but it also attracts adventurous, patriotic, and upwardly mobile Americans. As the Government Accountability Office has noted, above-average white males join the military and the combat arms in particular from a sense of patriotism and adventure. The post-9/11 spike in recruitment of white males from the highest economic quintile illustrates this point. But this does not suggest that these recruits do not join the military to learn skills and earn educational benefits, as is more commonly the case for blacks and women.<sup>29</sup>

It is also worth noting that current estimates of the eligible population (ages 18–24) suggest that approximately 7 out of 10 American youths are unfit for service because they have criminal records, cannot meet the minimum intellectual requirements, are physically unfit, and/or have a history of drug use.<sup>30</sup> Thus, the eligible population is highly winnowed before the decision to join the Service is made. And, contrary to popular myth, the military



U.S. Army Signal Corps



does not accept the Nation's prison-bound young men.

### Personality Typology

Although psychologists began examining personality typology in the early 1930s, there is no universally accepted set of personality traits and methods for their measurement.<sup>31</sup> There are also no recent and publicly available large studies examining personality characteristics of military members. This leaves the researcher to extract and compile relevant data from numerous and often incongruous sources to develop a composite sketch of the average military personality.

Within the rather small cadre of psychologists who study the military, there are a number of tools and methodologies used to develop personality profiles and measure leadership traits.<sup>32</sup> Studies examining leadership success at West Point, completion of Undergraduate Pilot Training, and completion of naval basic electrical and electronic training offer unique insights.<sup>33</sup>

As the literature notes, recruits offer three main reasons for joining the Services: educational benefits and training, adventure, and patriotism. The value placed on each varies with the individual. With that in mind, we turn to personality typology and the traits that often set military members apart from their civilian counterparts.

**Courage.** In a study of West Point cadets, courage was the most highly valued character trait, which is consistent with anecdotal evidence and expected acculturation. For example, Army Field Manual 6–22, *Army Leadership: Competent, Confident, and Agile*, lists the Army's seven core values relative to leadership: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that courage is a trait more readily evident in the military, as well as a value cultivated and necessary for advancement to senior officer and enlisted ranks. An anecdotal example demonstrates the great value placed on courage. As General Oliver Smith, commander of the First Marine Division during the first years of the Korean War, wrote:

*During the Reservoir operation I was never concerned about the security of Koto-ri. When he was told to go hold Koto-ri, Lewie [Lewis "Chesty" Puller] never questioned whether or not he had enough men to hold it; he simply made up his mind to hold it. His very presence reassured men; and he circulated constantly. The men knew Colonel Puller's reputation, that he had emerged with credit from many critical situations, and here he was in the flesh exuding confidence.*<sup>34</sup>

As the most decorated Marine in American history, Lewis Puller was widely known for his personal courage. It is a trait that has real value in combat, as the preceding passage demonstrates. One Marine chaplain echoed a similar sentiment concerning the Marines under Colonel Puller's command, stating,

*it is understandable that risk-acceptant behavior would be inculcated as a trait among Servicemembers who are already more risk-acceptant than society at large*

"You cannot exaggerate about the Marines. They are convinced to the point of arrogance that they are the most ferocious fighters on earth—and the amusing thing about it is that they are."<sup>35</sup>

Numerous quotations, similar in character, could be drawn from a variety of sources chronicling the exploits of many Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen. The importance, however, is to highlight the value of courage as a character trait, innate or learned, in members of the military.

**Risk-taking.** Related to courage is a second personality trait—risk-taking. A long-term study sponsored by the Army followed 675,626 Soldiers likely to be deployed to the Persian Gulf during Gulf War I.<sup>36</sup> Consistent with studies showing a lack of prudence and high levels of courage, results demonstrated a higher acceptance of risk-taking behaviors among Soldiers who deployed during the war. Interestingly, these "risk-acceptant" Soldiers were also physically and mentally healthier than their Army counterparts who did not deploy.<sup>37</sup>

Returning to the example of (later) General Puller, while serving as a battalion commander in World War II and a regimental commander in Korea, Puller consistently established his command post far closer to the frontlines than doctrine prescribed or other commanders practiced.<sup>38</sup> Puller's risk-taking encouraged his peers and subordinates to take greater risks themselves. Thus, it is understandable that risk-acceptant behavior would be inculcated as a trait among Servicemembers who are already more risk-acceptant than society at large.

Lieutenant Colonel (later General) Curtis E. LeMay acted similarly. During his first raid over St. Nazaire in late 1942, LeMay implemented a new bombing technique that placed B-17 crews at increased risk. To assuage fears and instill risk acceptance in 305<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing crew members, LeMay flew the lead—a habit he regularly practiced. His courage and risk acceptance led to the development of a highly successful bombing formation.<sup>39</sup>

**Hardiness.** A personality trait deserving special attention because it plays a key role in fostering other desirable traits is hardiness—that *resiliency* in the face of stress which

can make or break an individual's will when facing seemingly impossible circumstances.<sup>40</sup> While it is a trait found in abundance, it is not one that is learned. As one author notes, "The data suggest that Americans attracted to attend a service academy display a set of values consistent with U.S. military doctrine."<sup>41</sup> Just how far this study can be generalized across the Services is unknown, but the demands of military life and work are likely to cause a strong self-selection bias toward hardy individuals.



U.S. Air Force

Gen Curtis LeMay led by example to instill risk acceptance in Airmen

The value of hardiness cannot be emphasized enough. As with many of the other demographic variables and personality traits, the exhibition of one trait is often correlated with additional traits. Thus, positive and negative traits tend to be mutually reinforcing.<sup>42</sup>

**Prudence.** Members of the military exhibit a *dearth* of this important trait. As one study found, lower levels of prudence are seen in the military than in the general public.<sup>43</sup> Such a finding is expected. It is, however, interesting to note that senior military leaders are often risk-averse and, as examples in the historical record demonstrate, are often reluctant to make decisions where the outcome does not have a high probability of success. The exact nature of prudence and its variation among senior versus junior military personnel has not been studied. It could be because of “careerism” that senior officers are more prudent than junior officers. Or it could be the greater consequence of decisions that promote increased risk aversion. It could even be the difference in maturity between a senior leader and junior troops. Whatever the case, it is likely that senior officers will exhibit greater reluctance to take significant risks.

A composite sketch of military personnel suggests that on average Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen are courageous, risk-acceptant, and hardy. They are not, however, prudent. Additionally, data suggest that members of the military are also above average in intelligence, adventurous, and ambitious. While these findings are useful, more information is needed.

### Leadership Psychology

In one of the most recent studies of military leadership (2009), the authors administered the NEO-PI-R Personality Inventory to a group of officers who rated the leadership abilities of their peers.<sup>44</sup> This is of particular relevance because it may offer some insight into the personalities of senior leaders making decisions at the highest levels now and in the future. As previous research has demonstrated, peer ratings are a highly reliable predictor of officer success.<sup>45</sup>

The five personality traits included in the inventory are neuroticism (anxious, insecure, moody, and negative), extraversion (affiliative and social), openness to experience (nonconforming, autonomous, and imaginative), agreeableness (caring, cooperative, and tolerant), and conscientiousness

(dependable and achievement-oriented). Those high in extraversion, openness to experience, and conscientiousness were rated as effective leaders. Those seen as neurotic were not. The effects of agreeableness on leadership success were inconclusive.<sup>46</sup> These results suggest that current and future decisionmakers are positive in their outlook, which feeds into the military’s “can-do” attitude and the optimistic outcome most Servicemembers expect when conducting operations. They also suggest that leaders are likely to see obstacles as something to overcome rather than as limiting factors. The optimism that precedes conflict should not be overestimated. In most recent conflicts, prewar thinking among senior leaders suggested higher casualties than occurred (risk aversion), although that was accompanied by guaranteed success. Junior officers, however, often expected a quicker victory than was achieved.

Some additional conclusions can be drawn from the study’s findings. First, effective leaders (and those most likely to be promoted to senior ranks) tend to be less emotional than ineffective leaders. Second, effective leaders are also likely to defer to others and cooperate rather than compete. This second finding is also supported by anecdotal evidence frequently repeated within the military. It is often suggested that general officers do not reach senior rank by taking risks, but by moderating positions and seeking consensus. Portraits of a number of past Service Chiefs and Joint Chiefs of Staff are consistent with this conception, while portraits of the Nation’s great warrior-commanders look very different.<sup>47</sup>

Military officers most likely to be promoted and, therefore, influence the leadership styles of subordinates are extraverts open to new experiences and are conscientious about their decisions. They are also likely to seek consensus before making a decision, while avoiding risks that offer high costs and low rewards. Separate, but related, they are likely to minimize casualties while relying on technological advantage.

### Worldview

Returning to the civil-military relations literature is, in part, for the purpose of examining the worldview of the officer corps, a topic often overlooked. The worldview held by officers and enlisted is decidedly different from that of the American public writ large.

For those unfamiliar with the study of worldviews, one author describes a “world-view” as the answer to three questions: Who are we and where did we come from? What is wrong with the world? How can it be fixed?<sup>48</sup> Different worldviews answer each of these questions in their own unique ways.

A clear majority in the military adhere to a decidedly Judeo-Christian worldview, which holds a belief in a higher power, absolute truth, the real presence of good and evil in the world, and the ultimate triumph of good over evil.<sup>49</sup> This clear moral compass leads many in the military to look at American society as degenerate and lacking in those qualities that once made the Nation great.<sup>50</sup> It is the military, according to some Servicemembers, that exemplifies moral rectitude. Military sociologists such as Charles Moskos have lamented the seemingly growing separation between the broader society and the military.

---

*those high in extraversion, openness to experience, and conscientiousness were rated as effective leaders*

---

**Religion.** Military officers are more likely to participate in religious services than the enlisted ranks, but this is largely due to the high proportion of young single enlisted men.<sup>51</sup> As civilians, young men are also less likely to attend religious services than their elders. What separates the military, officers and enlisted, from the rest of society is the clear predominance of an identifiable right and wrong.<sup>52</sup> For elites who govern the country, attend Ivy League universities, and run large firms, a secular worldview is much more common. The notion of “personal truth” is antithetical to the nature of the military profession, yet the ability to determine one’s own truth is highly appealing for many elites within society.<sup>53</sup> As Huntington described it, the “military ethic consequently is a constant standard by which it is possible to judge the professionalism of any officer corps anywhere anytime.”<sup>54</sup> This same ethical consistency is applied to society writ large, which is often found wanting in the eyes of the military.

The moral ambiguity that is so important to many elite decisionmakers is often in short supply when examining the military.

Thus, the decisions a military leader is likely to make are constrained by a clear sense of black and white—absent shades of gray. As the Nation continues to rely on an all-volunteer force, the military worldview will likely persist and may become more prevalent.

**Politics.** The strong affiliation that many members of the military have with the Republican Party is a marked example of a Judeo-Christian worldview set to politics. It is an affiliation that crosses the officer/enlisted barrier, but is most pronounced in the officer corps and, more specifically, the Air Force.<sup>55</sup> During the 2008 Presidential election, Servicemembers supported Senator John McCain by a strong majority, despite the unpopularity of a “Republican war” in Iraq that has taxed the military and its families.<sup>56</sup>

The strong affiliation to the Republican Party is often dismissed as an alignment of convenience since Republicans favor military over social spending, but this answer fails to demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the strong moral and ethical disposition that governs military life and thinking. As Huntington noted more than 50 years ago, the military mind exemplifies “conservative realism.” Highly skeptical of intrinsic good, the military strongly adheres to President Ronald Reagan’s motto of “trust, but verify.”

Believing that man is a fallen creature and wicked by nature, the military is suspicious of grand proposals for creating world peace. As mentioned earlier, optimism is a core trait for successful leadership. It could be said that the military has a large number of skeptical optimists.

The portrait painted in the preceding pages describes the average Soldier, Sailor, Marine, or Airman, but may not look like any single Servicemember. It is based on the results of demographic data, surveys, history, and anecdotal evidence. Thus, it has limitations.

Without revisiting the entirety of his groundbreaking work, the evidence suggests that Samuel Huntington’s description of the military in 1957 remains valid over half a century later. It also suggests that the all-volunteer force is increasingly selecting an above-average group of young men and women to serve the Nation. Conservative politically and morally, the American military remains largely male, white, and young. Its members are courageous, hardy risk-takers who show a lack of prudence. Extroverted and open to new experiences, the military is likely to eschew grand schemes of world peace as it looks skeptically at the Nation’s adversaries. In the end, its leaders are slow to act and quick to seek consensus. If the historical record is accurate, it is much the same today as it has been. **JFQ**

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Neil Offen, “Hersh: Military Waging War with White House,” *The Herald Sun* (Durham, NC), October 14, 2009, available at <[www.heraldsun.com/pages/full\\_story/push?article=Hersh+Military+waging+war+with+White+House%20&id=3974209-Hersh+Military+waging+war+with+White+House&instance=homethirdleft](http://www.heraldsun.com/pages/full_story/push?article=Hersh+Military+waging+war+with+White+House%20&id=3974209-Hersh+Military+waging+war+with+White+House&instance=homethirdleft)>; Derrick Z. Jackson, “For African-Americans, Folly of This War Hits Home,” *Boston Globe*, May 9, 2007, available at <[www.boston.com/news/globe/editorial\\_opinion/oped/articles/2007/05/09/for\\_african\\_americans\\_folly\\_of\\_this\\_war\\_hits\\_home/](http://www.boston.com/news/globe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2007/05/09/for_african_americans_folly_of_this_war_hits_home/)>; CBS News, “Black Enlistment in Military Plummet,” November 11, 2007, available at <[www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/11/11/sunday/main3485906.shtml](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/11/11/sunday/main3485906.shtml)>; Deirdre Griswold, “Big Firms Get Rich as Iraq War Escalates,” *Workers World*, July 19, 2007, available at <[www.workers.org/2007/world/iraq-0726/](http://www.workers.org/2007/world/iraq-0726/)>.

<sup>2</sup> Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1960), vii.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1957).

<sup>4</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, “The Widening Gap Between the Military and Society,” *The Atlantic Monthly* (July 1997), 66–78; Peter Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, *Choosing Your Battles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Sean Alfano, “Rangel Will Push to Bring Back the Draft,” November 20, 2006, available at <[www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/11/19/ftn/main2199539.shtml](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/11/19/ftn/main2199539.shtml)>.

<sup>6</sup> Tim Kane, *Who Are the Recruits? The Demographic Characteristics of US Military Enlistment, 2003–2005* (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 2006), 3.

<sup>7</sup> There is no explanation in the data as to why \$80,000–\$84,999 is not included.

<sup>8</sup> Tim Kane, *Who Bears the Burden: Demographic Characteristics of Military Recruits Before and after 9/11* (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 2005), 5.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>10</sup> Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray discuss these issues in detail in several chapters of *The Bell Curve* (New York: Free Press, 1994), and a brief discussion by Murray can be found at <[www.cpsimoes.net/artigos/art\\_iq\\_succ.html](http://www.cpsimoes.net/artigos/art_iq_succ.html)>. See also Peter Hartmann et al., “Personality as Predictor of Achievement,” *Journal of Individual Differences* 30, no. 2 (January 2009), 65–74.

<sup>11</sup> Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, *2006 Population Representation in the Military Services* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2006).

<sup>12</sup> Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, *2006 Population Representation in the Military Services—Appendix B* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2006).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, tables B–4 through B–7.

<sup>14</sup> Harvey Joanning, “The Academic Performance of Vietnam Veteran College Students,” *Journal of College Student Personnel* 16, no. 1 (January 1975), 10–13.

<sup>15</sup> Defense Manpower Data Center, *Historical Data Tables* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2006), table D–22.

<sup>16</sup> Kane, 7.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>18</sup> David Segal and Mady Segal, “America’s Military Population,” *Population Bulletin* 59, no. 1 (December 2004), 18–25.

<sup>19</sup> The overrepresentation of blacks is more striking when it is thought of within the context of “eligible” blacks (ages 18–24) rather than the total black population. As a whole, blacks are less likely to be eligible for military service than whites. This means the military is recruiting a high percentage of the best and brightest black Americans. See Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Racial Differences Exist, with Blacks Disproportionately Represented among Homicide Victims and Offenders,” July 2007, available at <[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/race.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/race.htm)>;



U.S. Marine Corps (Ronald W. Stauffer)

Navy chaplain conducts religious service at Kandahar Air Field



Ivor Horn et al., "Discipline in the African American Community: The Impact of Socioeconomic Status on Beliefs and Practices," *Pediatrics* 133, no. 5 (May 2004), 1236–1241.

<sup>20</sup> Government Accountability Office (GAO), *Reporting Additional Service Member Demographics Could Enhance Congressional Oversight* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005), 79.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>22</sup> Amy Lutz, "Who Joins the Military? A Look at Race, Class, and Immigration Status," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 36, no. 2 (2008), 167–188.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>24</sup> Segal and Segal, 10.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>27</sup> Kane, 12.

<sup>28</sup> Sean Hammill, "Small Towns Pay Big Price in Fighting Nation's Wars," *Chicago Tribune*, April 27, 2005, 6.

<sup>29</sup> GAO, 79; Meredith Kleykamp, "College, Jobs, or the Military? Enlistment During a Time of War," *Social Science Quarterly* 87, no. 2 (June 2006), 272–290.

<sup>30</sup> Pauline Jelinek, "75% of Young People Are Ineligible for Military Service," Associated Press, March 13, 2006.

<sup>31</sup> G.W. Allport and H.S. Odbert, "Trait-names: A Psycho-lexical Study," *Psychological Monographs*, no. 47 (1933), 171–220.

<sup>32</sup> Among the tools/methodologies most commonly used to study personality and leadership in the military are the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, Automated Aircrew Personality Inventory, and Hogan Personality Inventory. Each develops a "personality composite" by examining a range of individual characteristics, which may range from as few as 5 to as many as 310.

<sup>33</sup> Paul T. Bartone et al., "Cognitive and Personality Predictors of Leader Performance in West Point Cadets," *Military Psychology* 14, no. 4 (2002), 321–338; Judith Johnson and Will Hill, "Personality Traits and Military Leadership," *Individual Differences Research* 7, no. 1 (2009), 1–13; Michael Matthews et al., "Character Strengths and Virtues of Developing Military Leaders: An International Comparison," *Military Psychology* 18, no. 3S (July 2006), S57–S68; Frederick Siem, "The Use of Response Latencies to Enhance Self-Report Personality Measures," *Military Psychology* 8, no. 1 (1996), 15–27; James Driskell et al., "Cognitive and Personality Predictors of Training Performance," *Military Psychology* 6, no. 1 (1994), 31–46; Paul T. Bartone, "The Need for Positive Meaning in Military Operations: Reflections on Abu Ghraib," *Military Psychology* 17, no. 4 (2005), 315–324.

<sup>34</sup> Burke Davis, *Marine! The Life of Chesty Puller* (New York: Bantam, 1962), 296.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Nicole Bell et al., "Demographic, Physical, and Mental Health Factors Associated with Deployment of Army Soldiers to the Persian Gulf," *Military Medicine* 165, no. 10 (2000), 762–772.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>38</sup> Davis, chapter 10.

<sup>39</sup> Warren Kozak, *LeMay* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2009), 108–117.

<sup>40</sup> S.R. Maddi, "The Existential Neurosis," *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 72 (1967), 311–325; S.R. Maddi and S.C. Kobasa, *The Hardy Executive* (Homewood, IL: Dow Jones, 1984).

<sup>41</sup> Matthews et al., S64.

<sup>42</sup> See Edgar F. Puryear, Jr., *19 Stars: A Study in Military Character and Leadership* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 2003).

<sup>43</sup> Driskell et al.

<sup>44</sup> Johnson and Hill, 1.

<sup>45</sup> R.E. Cristal, "Recurrent Factors Based on Trait Ratings," *Journal of Personality* 60 (1992), 221–224.

<sup>46</sup> Johnson and Hill, 3–4.

<sup>47</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower is perhaps the best example of a consensus-seeker, particularly during World War II. George Patton, on the other hand, was one of the Nation's great warrior-commanders, but failed to reach the highest ranks because of inability to work cooperatively with, for example, Bernard Montgomery. See Stephen Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier and President* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991); and Stanley Hirshon, *General Patton: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Harper, 2003).

<sup>48</sup> Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey, *How Now Shall We Live?* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 1993).

<sup>49</sup> Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey, *The Problem of Evil* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2001).

<sup>50</sup> Ricks, 69.

<sup>51</sup> Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn, "The Gap," *The National Interest* (Fall 2000), 31. The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life periodically conducts the U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, which is the most comprehensive survey of religion in the United States.

<sup>52</sup> Lydia Saad, "Church-Going among U.S. Catholics Slides to Tie Protestants," *Gallup*, April 9, 2009, available at <www.gallup.com/poll/117382/Church-Going-Among-Catholics-Slides-Tie-Protestants.aspx>.

<sup>53</sup> Jim Herrick, *Humanism: An Introduction* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2005).

<sup>54</sup> Huntington, 62.

<sup>55</sup> Ole Holsti, "A Widening Gap between the US Military and Civilian Society?" *International Security* 23, no. 3 (Winter 1998/1999), 5–42; Jerald Bachman et al., "Distinctive Military Attitudes among U.S. Enlistees, 1976–1997: Self-Selection Versus Socialization," *Armed Forces and Society* 26, no. 4 (Summer 2000), 561–585.

<sup>56</sup> Brendan McGarry, "Military Times Poll: Troops Backing McCain," *Army Times*, October 9, 2008, available at <www.armytimes.com/news/2008/10/military\_poll\_100508w/>.

## OPEN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

TRANSPARENCY • PARTICIPATION • COLLABORATION

“To help build a new foundation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we need to reform our government so that it is more efficient, more transparent, and more creative.”

—President Barack Obama  
April 25, 2009

### The Open Government Initiative

The Open Government Initiative is a new charge to transform the way government interacts with the public. NDU Press is doing its part to promote an informed public and give readers the opportunity to get involved, share ideas, and listen to others.

### Stay Informed and Share Ideas

NDU Press offers readers several ways to stay up to date on general activities, new publications, and topics of interest, and to share what is important to them:



Follow NDU Press on Twitter



Become an NDU Press fan on Facebook



Subscribe to the NDU Press Blog

Access all of these features at  
[www.ndu.edu/press/open](http://www.ndu.edu/press/open)

# Developing Air Force Strategists

# Change Culture, Reverse Careerism

By SCOTT A. BETHEL, AARON PRUPAS, TOMISLAV Z. RUBY,  
*and* MICHAEL V. SMITH



ADM Mullen addresses students at Air War College

Department of Defense (Chad J. McNeeley)

In a November 2008–February 2009 cross-governmental assessment of the geostrategic context in the U.S. Central Command region commissioned by General David Petraeus, there was a trend among team members to offer three simple words as a recommended strategy for the United States: *more, better, longer*. For whatever reason, many of these people, referred to by multiple media outlets as handpicked experts and strategists and the brightest minds in Washington, offered as their only idea that the United States needs to devote more resources, manage these resources better, and stay the course as long as it takes to win.

It has been nearly 14 years since Gregory Foster's commentary in *Joint Force Quarterly* on the dearth of strategic thinking in senior military ranks.<sup>1</sup> He asked then where our great military minds were, if there were any, or if senior military leaders even cared. We argue that the situation is worse today than it was when Foster wrote in 1996. How we got to the point where our best and brightest are able to offer only tired and uncreative strategies is not as important as what we need to do now. We must develop, nurture, and promote strategic thinkers. We define *strategic thinkers* as those officers who understand the inherent linkages between the abstract and concrete, between thinking and doing, and who eschew old checklists for new ideas and apply those ideas to potential future situations.

### New Flight Path

The U.S. Air Force is today at a challenging point in its history; it is increasingly called upon to deliver effects in combat that cannot be achieved at the near-zero risk desired by political and military leadership. Yet at the same time, the Air Force is under assault for not doing enough to support other Services in the current fight and for seeming to be wedded to technology and “toys” when the civilian leadership directs it to consider alternatives.

Since the Air Force was once the peerless leader in technology, innovation, and modernization, how did it arrive at this current situation? The Air Force was *the* place to go if

one was a creative thinker and problem-solver. Many of the brightest minds historically gravitated to the Service. Yet today, many Air Force senior leaders privately lament the dearth of strategic thinkers despite the fact that the same generation of senior officers has not identified, promoted, or even encouraged strategists. This article considers some reasons why the Air Force is considering this issue today. It proposes a flight path to developing the strategic thinkers the Service needs to put itself back on the map as the center of intellectualism within the U.S. Armed Forces.

In October 2008, Barry Watts, of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, published a monograph urging the Services to reconsider how they train senior leaders for developing strategy. He argued that while the United States does a great job teaching its forces to be proficient at the tactical level, the problems of strategy require a different skill set from senior leaders. As important as what Watts discussed is, it seems almost naïve to consider what he left out and what he assumed (contrary to his own advice) the Services, individually and organizationally, are capable of attaining.

Watts argued that the military needs to develop strategists either by better educating officers or by institutionalizing a place for strategists to live. Both of these efforts are ultimately doomed to fail and neither for malicious reasons. The first is illustrated by the fact that our professional military education (PME) system *believes* that it is educating strategists/leaders. In fact, the curriculum normally reflects the flavor of the day; it is not necessarily aimed at selected critical thinkers but at officers who show acumen at following directions and who pass through the right jobs to get promoted. Moreover, staff college and war college attendees are deemed future leaders not by any scientific method, but by an inconsistent evaluation by senior leaders. Furthermore, school attendance is viewed more as a “rite of passage” than a serious and rigorous honor that few are given access to, and where they are expected to perform at a higher academic level.

Despite the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff requirement to teach strategy,

there is little time within the curriculum to treat the subject seriously. In all fairness, the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies (SAASS) devotes its entire curriculum to strategic thinking, but that is a small number of officers a year compared to the much larger group of in-resident developmental education students. Also, Air University is making strides to enhance rigor within officer professional education through a distance learning Master's program as well as a new doctoral program. If those programs succeed and the graduates are placed in jobs using their skills, that will be a clear message to the Air Force that it must focus on producing strategic thinkers. But the problem is not with the few who seek to better themselves as strategists, but with the far greater gap between the need for strategists and the number we produce.

---

*our professional military education system is not necessarily aimed at selected critical thinkers but at officers who show acumen at following directions and who pass through the right jobs to get promoted*

---

Frequently, the Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) is asked by various senior leaders in Washington, as well as by congressional, joint, and Air staffs, how many hours it teaches on gas mask training, strategic failure in Iraq, airpower history, force protection, and on and on. These ad hoc inserts, often developed whimsically, leave little leeway to teach strategy in the curricula of the Service schools. At some point, the most well-meaning PME school commandants get tired and say, “Fine, just tell me what you want me to teach.”

The students are selected for Intermediate Developmental Education (for majors) and Senior Developmental Education (for lieutenant colonels and colonels) by a review of how well they were stratified in previous jobs and not by their ability to synthesize multiple streams and types of information into coherent inferences that can be applied to solving problems. They are selected based on how well they performed at the tactical level and not by any aptitude as strategists, or any other objective academic criteria. Furthermore, since they are a full tour (3 years) younger

---

**Brigadier General Scott A. Bethel, USAF, is Deputy Director of Intelligence, Operations, and Nuclear Integration at Air Education and Training Command. Colonel Aaron Prupas, USAF, is Deputy Director, Commanders Integration Group, U.S. Central Command. Colonel Tomislav Z. Ruby, USAF, is Chief of Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Doctrine at Headquarters U.S. Air Force, and Deputy Chief of Staff for ISR. Colonel Michael V. Smith, USAF, is a Doctoral Student at the University of Reading, England.**



today than officers who went to ACSC in 2000, they have a full tour's less experience (as well as a full tour's fewer performance reports with stratification). According to published briefings by the Air Force Directorate of Manpower (A1), an officer is expected to spend the first 11 years of his career developing tactical expertise in a weapons system—not showing abstract thinking ability or spending time in a tour working on strategy.

It is true that since 9/11, students have far more combat experience than in past years, but that experience is tactical and not strategic. It is based on demonstrated skill connected to a specific weapons system (for example, the F-15 or Distributed Ground Station) and to a lesser extent on leadership at the small unit level, but not on critical examination and participation in the development of national and operational strategy. We do



Department of Defense

**Gen Bernard Schriever worked outside staff structure to create Air Force ballistic missile and military space program**

not in any way argue that we should sidetrack officers from combat leadership or diminish the importance of their experience, which heavily factors into critical reasoning. We merely point out that early tactical experience alone is *insufficient* for making a strategist.

Finally, the very dirty and not so secret truth is that majors in PME today are the products of an educational system in which many colleges and universities no longer hold students to the standard of being able to write coherent, logical arguments. An informal

survey among Air University academics reveals that it is even worse today than in 1996, when Foster said war college students did not write well and were “victims of a system that prizes decidedly non-objective advocacy.” This truth cannot be overstated. It is little different from the national studies showing college graduates not being able to write paragraphs or form cogent arguments. If Air Force senior leaders read a sample of even top-tier majors’ ACSC papers, they would be appalled at the students’ inability to read through a problem, think through it, and write a solution. Many of the papers submitted for awards or publication are heavily edited by faculty to ensure that they are cogent and worthy products; the students simply do not know how to conduct critical analysis. Indeed, there is no lack of passion in the papers, but there is a great void where evidence and reason should be. When some Air University leaders argue for grading according to the objectively earned grades of all students, others respond that the Air Force Chief of Staff would never stand for a large number of his top-tier majors barely passing the course.<sup>2</sup>

While Watts’s recommendations are truly intriguing as a possibility for reforming PME, he overlooks a truth about organizations that would make it impossible to reverse the trend in strategic thinking in only three generations, as he claims is possible. No military organization lasts intact through three generations since officers constantly rotate in and out and work narrowly focused issues rather than broad strategic concepts. Recognizing this truth, the Air Force, since its inception, has tried to separate strategic thinkers from the mainstream. Tom Hughes wrote in *Rescuing Prometheus* how the Air Force had to move General Bernie Schriever out of the staff structure and into civilian clothes to work with industry to build the intercontinental ballistic missile force. The Air Force could not think beyond the use of its on-hand platforms. Likewise, consider what has happened to the Air Force Doctrine Center and Checkmate. They were once seen as think tanks where true creativity could flourish apart from the insistent demands of line-of-sight tasking and monotonous staff work. Not any more. Even when these organizations were filled with big thinkers, these officers eventually rotated out, or their analyses were never allowed to rise to the notice of senior leadership. And no matter how valued a strategic thinker is, he is alone and has little

influence when he is separated from the main body of senior leaders.

Nicholas Taleb, in his pithy book *The Black Swan*, mentions that the military is the place where it is most vital for out-of-the-box thinkers to reside. But that does not mean they are valued. Taleb discusses how mankind consistently misses the unexpected events that fundamentally change the course of human history because it only looks to the future based on what it has observed in the past. But future war is almost never just like the past. Echoing Richard Hofstadter’s classic *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*, Foster asserted in 1996 that “experience arms us almost always with conviction, hardly ever with wisdom. . . . undue emphasis on loyalty to the chain of command stifles dissent and erodes the spirit of inquiry so critical to institutional vitality.” This trend to rest on experience is one the Air Force must fight.

---

*no military organization  
lasts intact through three  
generations since officers  
constantly rotate in and out  
and work narrowly focused  
issues rather than broad  
strategic concepts*

---

### Away from Intellectualism?

The Air Force should seek out those officers who have a balanced brain—those who can not only intuit well and rapidly, but who also understand when it may be necessary to look for theories that can be generalized. Instead, the Service teaches “people, processes, and products” that make up the Air Operations Center at its command and staff college. It has often been said that generals in the Civil War went into battle with a sword in one hand and a copy of Antoine-Henri Jomini’s *Art of War* in the other. Jomini would have loved this picture, resting securely that this was warfare fought “properly.” But war was not proscriptive then, and it is not today. We need leaders who can break out of a rule-based paradigm.

There is no career path for strategists or strategic thinkers, and indeed there appears to be a trend away from intellectualism. The Air Force Ph.D. program at Air University and even the distance learning Master’s program have met with strong budgetary and cultural resistance. Rather

than disdaining intellectualism, senior leaders should be encouraged to read recent scholarship on strategic decisionmaking and ask themselves if they can learn something there. In addition to the long list of histories of command and leadership, Air Force senior leaders should have to read Scott Page's *The Difference*, Malcolm Gladwell's *Blink* and *Outliers*, James Surowiecki's *The Wisdom of Crowds*, and most importantly, Alec Fisher's *The Logic of Real Arguments*. Gladwell tells us that we all "thin slice," whether we mean to or not. He also argues that few of us are any good at thin slicing and that most of those who are good at it are only good in a narrow specialty. He does tell us we can get better by building depth of knowledge and breadth of experience. Surowiecki and Page tell us that in general, any diverse group will come up with a better answer than any single expert or small group of experts with similar backgrounds. That should be a huge, empirically validated warning to our leadership not to promote only those who look like themselves.

The balance between Gladwell and Surowiecki should be lessons that all senior officers learn en route to becoming strategists. Giovanni Gavetti and Jan Rivkin, in *How Strategists Really Think*, tell us that one of the greatest mistakes leaders make is applying the wrong experiential analogies to the situation at hand. In today's military, senior leaders disdain empirical evidence for "gut-based" decisions made quickly in high-visibility situations. As Watts mentions, too many of our leaders go on experience and apply lessons from the past to the problem at hand. The current problem, however, is rarely like any they previously faced; thus, the lessons they bring forward are not relevant. Experience is important, but for senior leadership we should seek out those who can adapt to the situation no matter what it is. Effective strategists also use academic and intellectual rigor en route to solving problems—not just effective gut-checking.

But this goes against how the Air Force selects people for school and more importantly how they are managed through subsequent assignments. Watts claims, "Most officers in combat arms will have gotten where they have in their service careers based mainly on demonstrating tactical competence, and few are likely to retain the mental agility to move beyond tactics. . . . mental agility to make the transition from tactics to

operational art or above tends to be either present in officers well along their careers or not." This is not necessarily incompatible with selecting critical/strategic thinkers, but it is a Venn diagram instead of a neat overlap. So the Air Force should decide whether it wants anointed top-tier officers sent to PME for a perfunctory break from the demands of unit level activity plus the bonus of a Master's degree, or a cadre of true strategic thinkers without regard to their career field and operational experience. If it is the former, we need do nothing today. If it is the latter, we need to understand the implications because of what strategic thinkers are expected to do.

It is critical to realize that one cannot separate conducting the operational level of war from advising national civilian leaders and developing national strategy. Samuel

asked the military to come up with objectives and endstates in the Balkans. He left it to the military to figure out. The George W. Bush administration was not only interested in international affairs but also asked the military for help with determining objectives and endstates. Then it used its own small group of insiders to develop strategy. Military leaders and mid-level staff officers must be comfortable and effective in both the operational and strategic realms.

---

*one cannot separate  
conducting the operational  
level of war from advising  
national civilian leaders and  
developing national strategy*

---



Crew maintains F/A-18 Hornet between airstrikes on Iraq during Operation Desert Fox

U.S. Navy (Nicholas H. Griseto)

Huntington's three responsibilities of a professional officer—informing national leadership of requirements for national defense, advising national leaders of the implications of alternative courses of action, and carrying out orders no matter how distasteful—are an enduring example of this inseparability, either practically or ideologically. Senior military leaders cannot expect civilians to develop a strategy and hand it to the military to implement. President Bill Clinton focused on, and was more experienced with, domestic affairs, and

It is for this reason that we urge the Air Force to select and promote more officers who think in the abstract. We need more individuals from the liberal arts who can form heuristics reflecting the uniqueness of the problem at hand. Today, the military is heavily populated with deductive thinkers. We think there should be a greater balance with those comfortable with inductive reasoning. Each person has some ability in both ways of thinking, but most think one way or the other. Still, the cutoff point

for that line is in a different place for each individual.

One excellent example of critical reasoning never written into any book or article was found in 1997 in Joint Task Force–Southwest Asia. Air Force fighter crews knew there were numerous Iraqi surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) south of where they were allowed because the Iraqis actively tracked U.S. jets from these positions on almost every mission. But those SAMs never showed up on the orders of battle. The U.S. Intelligence Community refused to believe the SAMs were there because their national systems did not detect them. It was not until the situation was forced and intelligence assets were specifically tasked to look for them that the order of battle suddenly exploded with “new” SAM sites, causing a cascade of planning that ended with Operation *Desert Fox*. The heuristic of the Intelligence Community was that fighters cannot see the “real situation,” and if intelligence assets do not see it, it simply is not there. The community had no ability to see beyond its narrow heuristic even when confronted with new data.

### Habits of Mind

Many will argue that if we cannot learn from experience, there is nothing we can know. We do not claim that experience is irrelevant; there is much one can learn and apply from experience. The art lies in understanding how to apply past experience to present situations, and knowing when that does not work. While we may never be able to identify and quantify every variable, we should be able to identify the common variables from case to case and apply them in new or unique ways, or break them down and apply lessons from disparate experiences in innovative combinations. That is why there is the study of social science. Are we open to scientific research and empirical testing or not? The Air Force should be. Sadly, the pace of current operations and the demands on our leaders mean they are often too busy working their Blackberries on the commute home or checking email and the slides for their next briefing to read and reflect.

Preparing the Air Force for the next conflict by even the most rigorous training based on past experience can make us the best bomber, fighter, and cyber warriors in the world, especially if the coming conflict looks exactly like the training scenarios we develop. But in a not so funny fact of history,

wars always result in operational and strategic surprises. America’s military *never* thought beyond the first battle. The onset of war was usually greeted with great fanfare. However, war is fickle and usually turns on its masters. We have reidentified that lesson the hard way since 2001. Whether we will learn it remains to be seen.

We contend that the U.S. Armed Forces need to do strategy better; they cannot wait for Presidential approval or participation of other agencies to develop strategists. We do not think the Services have been absent from decisionmaking altogether. Rather, they have not recently produced good ideas beyond short-term (and sometimes parochial) goals. Many in the military are desperate for direction from civilian leaders to develop strategic thinkers. The Armed Forces must indeed embrace strategic thinking on their own. The American people expect no less. But how?

---

*the Services have not recently produced good ideas beyond short-term (and sometimes parochial) goals*

---

The Air Force must embrace strategic thinking from its senior leaders all the way down through PME. Strategy is difficult, but we do not need to *rediscover* how to do it. We need to train to it. Carl von Clausewitz provided an excellent methodology almost 200 years ago. Strategists need to have certain habits of mind:

*Theory will have fulfilled its main task when it is used to analyze the constituent elements in war, to distinguish precisely what at first seems fused, to explain in full the properties of the means employed and to show their probable effects, to define clearly the nature of the ends in view, and to illuminate all phases of warfare in a thorough critical inquiry. Theory then becomes a guide to anyone who wants to learn about war from books; it will light his way, ease his progress, train his judgment, and help him to avoid pitfalls. . . . It is meant to educate the mind of the . . . commander, or, more accurately, to guide him in his self-education, not to accompany him to the battlefield.*

Let us consider the evolution of jointness as an analogy to explain the problems of creating strategists. Jointness demonstrates

the difficulty of making the Services adopt a concept that is internally and externally foreign to them. It cannot be legislated, although many think the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 provided a kind of magic wand approach. Legislation and organizations and the like had a role in *mechanically* making the Services more joint. However, it was the willingness of each Service culture to change itself that determined successful integration. The underpinning of success throughout the Defense Department was the realization that no single Service, no matter how much it needed to compete with the others for supremacy, could achieve objectives on its own. Strategy possesses the same characteristics: it cannot be legislated, it cannot be bureaucratized, it cannot be forced, and it cannot be ordered. It can only be recognized as important and sought after as a worthy pursuit in its own right.

What we need is to cast a wider net to find senior leaders and strategists. The Air Force currently has a homogenous senior leadership corps. This is not based on a particular mold or model we want leaders to resemble. It is a default result of a promotion process that necessitates multiple early promotions to be competitive for leadership (squadron/wing/group command) and general officer rank. To earn those early promotions, an officer must be (ideally) positioned for general officer consideration by the 24-year point. This means that those officers competitive for general will have had a similar career track that included operational assignments with one or at best two short staff stints to include a minimum of 22 months in a joint assignment. Those with diverse or nonstandard experiences in national security assignments, attaché positions, and as instructors at the academies or PME schools are unlikely to have been positioned for command and thus promotion. Unlike the Army, which has one O–6 level command and expects officers to make general in 25 years, the Air Force necessarily limits an officer’s strategic depth by its singular promotion track. While there is no substitute for time and experience when promoting officers to the strategy/decision level, we should be able to accept that they need not all have reached a particular rank by an artificially early career point.

Another part of the overall picture is keeping officers, in particular senior officers, in place longer. The current rate of officer



moves is still 18 months, and senior officers move approximately every 14 months. Such rapid movement gives little time to even get acquainted with the specifics of the job at hand, let alone engage in strategy. Furthermore, there is little opportunity to read, ponder, and consider the best approach for the future. Officers can barely keep up with the inbox, emails, and Blackberry traffic. At the same time, an adept strategist is not tracked through the assignment process and given more opportunity to continue to strategize. The normal process is to get back to the “expected” career track as quickly as possible. That means getting to a command, getting back in the cockpit, or moving as rapidly as one is able to the “operational” components of the Air Force. In fact, many officers deeply fear and disdain (at least outwardly) the notion of a tour as a strategist. Many view such an assignment as a painful sidetrack to be endured, not embraced, and certainly

not sought after. In order for the Air Force to develop and retain strategists, that must change.

In a forthcoming study commissioned by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, researchers found that when determining the accuracy of medical diagnoses, it was better for expert panels either to have more people (to increase chances of diverse backgrounds) or for experts to be paired with assertive and empowered nonexperts who could challenge expert opinions. Two experts from the same background are actually less likely to get the right answer than less experienced panelists from varied backgrounds. While there are certainly outliers to the mean, average

Air Force officers, regardless of their race or gender, come from similar and narrow experiences and are often unable to accept that a correct or even better strategy can come from outside their own cognitive models. After all, if they were not the best, they would not have made it to their senior rank. It is normal human inclination to recreate ourselves—thus, the trend toward a templated promotion process that results in a common core of experience at the decisionmaker/strategist level.

We mentioned earlier the trend toward relying on experience rather than critical thinking and inductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning is not hard merely for military officers, but for almost everyone. In Taleb’s *The*

---

*Air Force officers come from similar and narrow experiences and are often unable to accept that a correct or even better strategy can come from outside their own cognitive models*

---



Officers assigned as instructors at academies or PME institutions are unlikely to have been positioned for command

U.S. Air Force (David Armer)

*Black Swan*, he argues that because humans rely so much on past experience, they cannot conceive of a situation that has not happened before. Until black swans were discovered in Australia, the notion that a black swan could exist was beyond the experts' imagining simply because one had never been seen. But military officers need to be prepared for more than swans of a color they do not expect. They must deal with situations of national security that can spell success or doom for their country.

What is really important is the ability to put together dissimilar experiences, married with effective training and analytical tools, to create a new paradigm to match the challenge at hand. We need to make an elastic way of thinking the norm to better integrate theory and experience to create the right solution. We must develop inductive reasoning among our officer corps to balance out the deductive reasoning tilt.

Inductive reasoning is only one attribute of successful strategists. They must also exhibit:

- creativity
- curiosity
- confidence
- high intelligence without subject fixation
- ability to collate and make sense out of massive amounts of data
- great and diverse intellect
- thorough knowledge of the means
- intuitive understanding of the ends.

The first four traits are either inherent or not. For the last four, there is education. We place creativity at the top because crafting strategies, like war itself, is an art. We posit that educating an officer to be a strategist is for naught if the first four traits are not present. The trick is to identify officers with the first four traits and mark them as candidates for advanced education and eventual placement on a strategy team.

We must demand more of our officers—not in terms of time or energy (most give more than their fair share whether they have it or not), but in terms of how they *think*. It is not as simple as faculty being tougher on PME students. Air Force senior leadership would have to expect more from students for an entire generation for that demand for excellence to sustain itself. The greater the demand for excellence throughout the continuum of learning and experience, the larger the pool

of potential strategists is each year. Right now, every staff wants PME graduates because it is accepted that they have read more widely and have learned to think “better” than other peers. If we raise the bar for all officers, then we will not have to fight over PME graduates and hope that if we do get one, he or she turns out to be a good strategist.

In short, we should not worry about creating a metric for determining who is a strategist before duty calls. No profession can do that. Despite the schooling and preparation, some fail the test of actually *doing*. Jomini is prescriptive and asks his students to be deductive thinkers in the application of his theory. Clausewitz is educational and asks his students to be inductive thinkers and to reason their way through the challenges of war. These two theorists presented lessons we need to meld together for today's challenges. Whether a strategist is developed by nature (born) or by nurture (education) is a question we cannot answer. However, those who are not born strategists will get better, and they will have a clearer appreciation both of the need for strategy and of its requirements through the increased focus at PME, and programs such as SAASS. More importantly, those who are born strategists have the environment and career track to become great.

### Finding Balance

Who, then, should be the Air Force's planners and senior leaders? Again, the Air Force needs both inductive and deductive thinkers—but with broad experiences, especially combat testing when applicable. Planners and senior leaders should be steeped in the liberal arts and not only science and engineering. But what sort of individuals fill our officer corps and serve as our planners today? They are primarily deductive thinkers who disdain liberal arts and commonly have engineering or technical degrees.

There is good reason to fear producing clones because we are all different. The challenge becomes assigning individuals to positions according to their abilities. This is where we are failing. We are not confident that our strategic culture would be comfortable systematically identifying inductive thinkers and routing them into war planning and related leadership positions. We are convinced that, if given the chance, experiential deductive thinkers both within the Air Force and outside severely threaten the very existence of the Service. It is difficult to deductively

develop strategies to make use of airpower's inherent strengths and capabilities apart from narrow support roles for troops on the ground. These leaders have never been forced to think outside of their experiences. We must ensure that our senior leaders and planners are diverse in background and experience.

Let us be clear on one point: deductive thinking is required in campaign planning and in airpower theory, especially when it comes to establishing quantifiable metrics and measuring against them. Pressed up against the realities of war, deductive thinkers do a great job killing the enemy, but it is inductive thinkers who master how to discourage enemy forces from wanting to continue to fight. And it is inductive thinkers who are best able to determine how to achieve victory on a variety of battlefields against innumerable conflicts and challenges. The metrics to measure each are very different. One is an empirical count while the other cannot be measured.

Airpower and effects-based operations more or less make war a studio that gives the artist long brushes to paint with—but the policymaker owns those brushes. We are not talking about painting with paints, but with violence, so it is only fitting for the policymaker to keep ownership of the brushes at all times. For this, our officers must be prepared to think beyond their narrow experiences. They must look different from one another. Our officers must be broadly read, and they must be comfortable with multiple constructs of thinking. It is not too high a bar to set. **JFQ**

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Gregory D. Foster, “Research, Writing, and the Mind of the Strategist,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 11 (Spring 1996), 111–115.

<sup>2</sup> Two of the authors were Vice Deans at Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) while another was a faculty member. Four were students at ACSC, and all five attended either civilian postgraduate/doctoral programs and/or sister Service fellowships.

# Military Dissuasion

## A Framework for Influencing PLA Procurement Trends

By ERIC SAYERS

**T**he United States and its friends and allies maintain serious reservations about the long-term impact the assumptions underpinning the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) will have on America's ability to sustain its military commitments in the Asia-Pacific. Nevertheless, Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michèle Flournoy deserve credit for recognizing and seeking to address the near-term strategic challenges posed by China's People's Liberation Army (PLA). As part of the 2009 QDR process, Gates and Flournoy tasked a special High-End Asymmetric Threat (HEAT) team to focus on, among other things, the implications of China's ongoing

military modernization effort to acquire capabilities that can erode America's traditional power projection capacity and limit its freedom of action in the western Pacific.

However, effectively countering the HEAT advantages the PLA is building will take more than the series of operational shifts and procurement decisions the QDR has recommended. The geostrategic consequences of the ongoing redistribution of power in the Asia-Pacific require the United States to think more broadly. Washington must complement its power projection and deterrence capabilities by adopting a military dissuasion framework that seeks to influence the procurement trends underpinning Beijing's military modernization in a direction that is more favorable to U.S. interests. Dissuasion, as opposed to deterrence, aims to raise the perception of costs and/or decrease the perception of likely benefits from either acquiring or expanding a threatening

military capability.<sup>1</sup> Although a dissuasion strategy has its limitations, if properly exploited it can help to undermine the strategic advantage Beijing has sought to gain from pursuing high-end asymmetric capabilities. The congressionally mandated Independent Panel that is set to review the QDR's findings can advance this effort by further developing and operationalizing this concept.

### PLA HEAT Capabilities

While many believe China harbors ambitions to eventually project power on a global scale, Beijing recognizes that even in its own back yard, it cannot expect to match American military strength—"fighter to fighter and ship to ship," as Secretary Gates has said—for the next 10 to 20 years. To overcome this dilemma, the PLA has sought

---

Eric Sayers is a Master of Science Candidate in the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore.



B-52 arrives at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, to support U.S. Pacific Command's request for rotational bomber force

U.S. Air Force (Bernie J. Davis III)



to increase its military power over the past decade by focusing on the medium-term goal of developing an array of capabilities designed to serve a larger high-end asymmetrical strategy. According to Secretary Gates, this strategy aims “to neutralize our advantages—to deny the U.S. military freedom of movement and action while potentially threatening our primary means of projecting power: our bases, sea and air assets, and the networks that support them.”<sup>2</sup> The end result is a PLA that, despite its present symmetrical inferiority, has a growing capacity to dislocate and disrupt American military advantages. This strategy will give the PLA the ability to deter and, if necessary, deny U.S. forces access to the western Pacific.<sup>3</sup>

The PLA believes America’s ability to project power is heavily reliant on its satellite and electromagnetic network for communications, aircraft carriers and other blue-water Navy platforms, and fighters and long-range

but rather to raise the political costs associated with the decisionmaking and policy implementation cycle in Washington. It therefore draws as much on the teachings of Sun Tzu and Mao Tse-tung as on the lessons China has absorbed from observing U.S. operations against the inferior yet elusive forces that have frustrated American efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan over the past 8 years.<sup>5</sup>

As PLA capabilities mature, they stand to erode America’s ability to project power in the region. This will call into question the integrity of America’s regional security commitments and potentially encourage adventurism, miscalculation, or a destabilizing regional arms buildup. America’s relationships with states like Japan, Australia, and Singapore that have chosen to bind their long-term security to the continued presence of American military power may be directly affected, making it gradually more difficult for the United States to maintain its leadership role in the region.

But these adjustments, while sound, remain mired in a limited “hedging” strategy that is focused on observing the developments of China’s military modernization and making preparations to deal with it in a worst-case scenario. In its current form, this policy has become an incomplete mechanism for contesting PLA modernization. Since the end of the Cold War, defense planning in the United States has rested on the assumption that the emergence of a peer competitor will be identified and accounted for in the budget planning process long before that power is able to pose a credible threat. But the scope of China’s military expansion combined with its focus on developing high-end asymmetric platforms threatens the validity of this traditional assumption. Because the PLA’s high-end asymmetric capabilities are allowing it to increasingly “pose problems without catching up,” as one foresighted China analyst observed almost a decade ago, deterrence alone cannot



U.S. Navy (Tiffini M. Jones)

**Chief of Naval Operations ADM Roughead visits People’s Liberation Army Navy headquarters in Beijing**

bombers at forward-deployed bases in Japan, South Korea, and Guam. In response, its decade-long modernization effort has sought to expand its antisatellite and cyber warfare capabilities to target America’s command and control network; develop antiship ballistic and cruise missiles, and enhance its proficiency in mine warfare and antisubmarine warfare as part of a sea denial strategy; and deploy large numbers of land attack cruise missiles (LACMs) and short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) to target and hold at risk the air bases of America and its allied and partner nations.<sup>4</sup>

Although achieved with military means, the PLA’s strategic intention is not to gain a decisive military advantage on the battlefield

*the PLA’s strategic intention is not to gain a decisive military advantage on the battlefield but rather to raise the political costs associated with the decisionmaking and policy implementation cycle in Washington*

### **Insufficient Deterrence Model**

While the United States will continue to engage China diplomatically, economically, and militarily to avoid miscalculation and exploit areas of mutual interest, it will also have to expand efforts to preserve its strategic credibility in the region in the face of China’s rapid development of high-end asymmetrical advantages. Planning for this begins with the QDR. Michèle Flournoy, who is overseeing the QDR, and Shawn Brimley, who is said to have had a strong hand in its development, argued before the review’s release that countering China’s anti-access capabilities “may be more about identifying where new operational concepts and discrete investments are needed than focusing on major shifts in force structure.”<sup>6</sup> The QDR’s final recommendations are consistent with this vision: investing in capabilities that can extend the range of America’s power projection platforms, working to better defend and disperse military assets throughout the region, placing greater emphasis on preserving the survivability and redundancy of space and electromagnetic communication networks, and developing a joint air-sea battle concept.

suffice as the guiding mantra of U.S. defense strategy in the Asia-Pacific.<sup>7</sup>

### **Opportunities and Limitations**

Pointing out the inadequacies of the current hedging policy does not imply that the United States should abandon its efforts to engage Beijing or invest in a costly and escalatory effort to contain it. Instead, the United States should adopt new ways of thinking about how it can implement a broader strategic agenda that does not merely observe and adjust to PLA modernization developments in an effort to maintain credible conventional deterrence but that actively seeks to shape them in a direction more conducive to U.S. interests. This could be achieved by adopting a military dissuasion strategy that aims to get inside the PLA’s decisionmaking cycle and attempts to influence its procurement trends.

Although dissuasion was mentioned in the 2002 and 2006 Quadrennial Defense Reviews and the 2005 National Defense Strategy, its definition has remained murky. In many instances, this has allowed the term to become synonymous with *deterrence*. Andrew Krepinevich and Robert Martinage have

offered the most comprehensive definition of *dissuasion* to date, drawing a clear conceptual distinction with deterrence: Whereas *deterrence* aims to prevent another state from using or threatening to use a military capability, military *dissuasion* acts as a type of pre-deterrence that aims to prevent a rival from developing a threatening military platform or technology in the first place.<sup>8</sup> This can be achieved by harnessing a number of tools that can raise a target's perception of the anticipated cost and/or decrease its perceptions of the likely benefits from developing or expanding a military platform or technology it deems to be threatening.

A dissuasion framework can offer a range of possibilities to discourage the PLA from acquiring HEAT capabilities by carefully considering the impact Washington's procurement decisions and diplomatic maneuvers can have.

**Military Procurement and Investment Decisions.** America's military modernization (research and development and procurement) decisions offer a number of ways for influencing the PLA's own investment and procurement choices. For instance, the U.S.

military's reliance on satellites has created a vulnerability that the PLA has sought to exploit by developing kinetic and nonkinetic antisatellite (ASAT) weapons. A dissuasion framework would suggest dealing with this problem by reducing the PLA's perceived effectiveness of investing in these weapons. This would mean developing miniaturized

---

*pointing out the inadequacies of the current hedging policy does not imply that the United States should abandon its efforts to engage Beijing or invest in a costly and escalatory effort to contain it*

---

and fractional (a series of miniature satellite subsystems that exist independently as part of a network) satellites that can be dispersed in larger constellations in space or put on standby on the ground to surge capacity in the event of an emergency. This would both enhance their survivability and diminish the value accrued by targeting them. Construct-

ing a more resilient network by complementing its space-based assets with air-breathing or terrestrial alternatives, as Air Force Chief of Staff General Norton Schwartz has recently suggested, would also be a means to diminishing the utility of ASAT weapons in the eyes of the PLA.<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, the United States could reduce the anticipated advantage SRBMs and LACMs offer for holding its fighters and bombers at risk by investing in passive and active defensive measures at its bases in the region. This would require hardening bunkers and runways to protect and preserve the operational capability of U.S. and allied aircraft, the hardening of other mission-critical facilities like fuel depots, maintaining the capacity to promptly repair damaged runway surfaces, and deploying air and missile defense systems.<sup>10</sup> It would also be prudent to consider expanding the number of access points that America has in the Pacific, preferably with less obtrusive forward operating sites or cooperative security locations, to places such as Tinian, Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Johnston, Midway, Wake, and the Kwajalein islands to help diffuse its air assets.<sup>11</sup>



Under Secretary Michèle Flournoy, Secretary Gates, and Gen Cartwright meet with deputy prime minister and defense minister of Singapore

The development of carrier-based long-range strike platforms that would allow carrier strike groups to operate farther out to sea could also reduce the perceived operational and psychological advantages offered by Beijing's growing antiship ballistic and cruise missile capabilities. This would help to lower potential political costs in Washington while preserving a greater range of freedom for decisionmakers to effectively harness the utility of coercive naval diplomacy, as it was able to do effectively during the 1995–1996 Taiwan Strait crisis.<sup>12</sup> The development of a long-range strike platform might have the added benefit of compelling the PLA to expend its limited resources to upgrade and expand expensive, nonthreatening air defense systems.

**Diplomatic Tools.** A host of options to influence PLA procurement decisions are available in the diplomatic realm as well. As Beijing remains sensitive to external criticism and keen to broaden the legitimacy of its “peaceful development” narrative, Washington could continue to challenge China on a number of fronts. These challenges could range from continuing to publicly question the underlying intentions of Beijing's military modernization, to more directly inquiring about its development of threatening capabilities such as ASAT weapons, cyber warfare capabilities, and the large number of SRBMs and LACMs aimed at Taiwan. Washington could augment these diplomatic efforts by outsourcing them to allies and neighboring states that share its concerns and are willing to speak forthrightly about them. These initiatives, while likely to be limited in their capacity to effect serious change, could nevertheless serve to increase the political costs related to both testing and deploying specific military systems. This is especially true with regard to those capabilities that Beijing may not consider critical enablers of its broader military doctrine.

Washington could also consider decisions concerning foreign military sales with its friends and allies in a more strategic manner by situating them within a larger dissuasion framework. What effect will selling military components that increase the effectiveness of the army and air force capabilities of a continental power like India have on investments in the PLA's border defense forces and the People's Armed Police, which compete for budget dollars with the PLA's Taiwan deterrence mission? How is Beijing

likely to react if Washington moves to further enhance the ballistic missile defense capabilities of states like Japan, South Korea, and India? More specifically, how will PLA Navy (PLAN) and Air Force investment decisions respond to India's planned procurement of Boeing's advanced P-8 Poseidon multimission maritime aircraft? These decisions, while disconnected and arguably likely to occur regardless of whether a dissuasion framework is institutionalized and applied, could nevertheless be managed more efficiently if their implications on the complex security environment of the Asia-Pacific were considered in a more multidimensional manner.

An understanding of military dissuasion and efforts to manipulate PLA procurement trends can also offer U.S. defense planners a more pragmatic perspective on long-term PLA modernization developments. Foremost among these is the PLAN's ambition to construct an aircraft carrier in the coming decade. The reality remains that in the near term an aircraft carrier is not only a vulnerable target for U.S. forces, but also an extraordinary undertaking requiring significant investments to design, construct, maintain,

tary dissuasion lens offers an alternate and more advantageous perspective. Instead of directing its attention toward the construction of a carrier, the United States might instead look to gently encourage this largely nonthreatening development—or at the very least not overreact to it—while expending its diplomatic capital elsewhere.

**Dissuasion and Its Limits.** Although a dissuasion framework offers a number of promising ways to influence PLA procurement decisions, its implementation is by no means a scientific enterprise. Even if dissuasion is successful, a new dilemma arises: what would China do with the resources that would be freed up by not pursuing the platforms and technologies it may have otherwise invested in? Furthermore, even if China's perception of benefits from expanding a capability is decreased, it may still determine that the capability the United States is attempting to dissuade the PLA from acquiring or expanding is essential to their military planning. This could very well be the case with antisatellite or antiship ballistic missiles, for example.

Another consequence that the United States must be aware of is the prospect that

---

*Washington could consider decisions concerning foreign military sales with its friends and allies in a more strategic manner by situating them within a larger dissuasion framework*

---

and sustain while also training and managing its crew. Additionally, as the U.S. Navy's own experience with carriers has demonstrated, to keep a permanent carrier presence at sea, the PLAN will have to possess at least two carriers along with the necessary aircraft and support ships. Nan Li and Christopher Weuve recently estimated that developing and deploying two carrier strike groups would cost China roughly \$20 billion plus another \$400 million annually in operational costs.<sup>13</sup> While the PLA has continued to trim costs by reducing the size of its armed forces, a carrier program is still likely to force the PLA to redirect resources from more threatening and less costly access-denial platforms. While these budgeting tensions may only be temporary, they are likely to be most pronounced in the coming decade when the United States will still be struggling to adjust to the PLA's HEAT advantages.

Therefore, while the development of a PLA carrier is often discussed with alarm, viewing this type of decision through a mili-

China may be equally motivated to harness the tools of dissuasion against it. For example, neither China nor Russia wants to see the United States extend its dominance to space because of costs and technological hurdles. In response, they have sought to raise diplomatic pressure on Washington through vocal criticism of “space weaponization” and their support for an international ban on related technologies. Although difficult to quantify, the international consensus that stands behind the Chinese and Russian stated desire to keep space free of military competition has no doubt raised the political costs for the United States of developing, testing, and deploying space-based missile defense systems and kinetic antisatellite weapons.

The difficulties associated with implementing a dissuasion strategy, and attempting to avoid being the target of dissuasion while developing counterdissuasion strategies, are only magnified as actors operate iteratively inside one another's decisionmaking cycles. Thus, it will be vital to develop



methods to measure the limits of America's own dissuasion efforts so that decisionmakers can weigh the impact of their policies against the potential costs. Timely and accurate intelligence will play a crucial role in this process. Understanding China's strategic culture and PLA service culture will also be essential.

### Operationalizing a Concept

Despite being mentioned in numerous military and national security planning documents over the past decade, the concept of military dissuasion remains misunderstood and underdeveloped. At present, it is also in no way an institutional component of America's broader national security strategy. Although the QDR has brought greater attention to the PLA's HEAT challenge, it gives only passing reference to dissuasion. Fortunately, an opportunity exists to develop and operationalize the concept as part of the 2010 Independent Panel established by Congress in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010. The panel's primary responsibility will be to "conduct an assessment of the assumptions, strategy, findings, and risks in the report of the Secretary of Defense on the QDR." But as was the case during the first National Defense Panel in 1997, the 2010 panel will be a vehicle to not just assess the QDR's findings but also to propose innovative ideas that may not have been given their due in the extended and often burdensome enterprise that is the QDR process. This may also generate a broader discussion of dissuasion that could grant it more serious consideration as part of the President's forthcoming National Security Strategy.

To exploit the benefits dissuasion can offer, the panel will have to recognize the interagency and intergovernmental demands that will challenge the ability of the White House, Congress, State Department, and Pentagon to coordinate. This may be why—despite the suggestion of some that the Pentagon would be best suited to oversee the implementation of a dissuasion strategy—this effort should be organized out of the National Security Council. Whether this would be the responsibility of a new Senior Director for Dissuasion or part of the portfolio of the Deputy National Security Advisor or even National Security Advisor will be a critical question for the panel to address.

### Toward a Framework

The United States has long been tempted by the notion that it has the power to shape the international system and the actions of the states that reside within it. Often, this has proven to be an illusion generated by a misjudgment of its own power. Although dissuasion is far from a Newtonian enterprise whose implementation can be scientifically predicted, its narrow focus offers a realistic way for civilian and military leaders to attempt to influence Beijing's military procurement trends in advantageous directions. More importantly, although many of the decisions made as part of a dissuasion strategy are likely to have been made anyway, a dissuasion framework allows defense planners and policymakers to conceptualize how seemingly independent military, economic, and diplomatic variables can interact as part of a multidimensional hedging policy.

China's emerging asymmetric power stands as a direct challenge to the credibility of America's military commitments in the region over the next two decades. The QDR should be applauded for bringing a greater focus to some of the investments and operational shifts required in the midterm. But if the United States is to be expected to sustain its ability to project power throughout the Asia-Pacific, it will also benefit from adopting a military dissuasion strategy that seeks to utilize the Nation's vast material and diplomatic resources to help identify and manipulate procurement trends in the PLA's ongoing modernization effort. **JFQ**

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The author owes a considerable debt to Andrew Krepinevich and Robert Martinage for their previous research on this topic. See Krepinevich and Martinage, *Dissuasion Strategy*, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, May 2008, available at <[www.csbaonline.org/4Publications/PubLibrary/R.20080506.Dissuasion\\_Strateg/R.20080506.Dissuasion\\_Strateg.pdf](http://www.csbaonline.org/4Publications/PubLibrary/R.20080506.Dissuasion_Strateg/R.20080506.Dissuasion_Strateg.pdf)>.

<sup>2</sup> Robert M. Gates, remarks at the Naval War College, Newport, RI, April 17, 2009, available at <[www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1346](http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1346)>.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Roger Cliff et al., *Entering the Dragon's Lair: Chinese Anti-access Strategies and Their Implications for the United States* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2007); and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2009* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2009), available at

<[www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/China\\_Military\\_Power\\_Report\\_2009.pdf](http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/China_Military_Power_Report_2009.pdf)>.

<sup>4</sup> On the implications of the PLA's ballistic and cruise missile development see, for example, David A. Shlapak et al., *A Question of Balance: Political Context and Military Aspects of the China-Taiwan Dispute* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2007); on PLA antisatellite developments, see Ian Easton, "The Great Game in Space: China's Evolving ASAT Weapons Programs and Their Implications for Future U.S. Strategy," *Project 2049 Institute*, 2009; on PLA mine warfare developments, see Andrew S. Erickson, Lyle J. Goldstein, and William S. Murray, *Chinese Mine Warfare: A PLA Navy 'Assassin's Mace' Capability*, China Maritime Studies Institute, China Maritime Study no. 3 (2009); on PLA anti-ship ballistic missile developments, see Andrew S. Erickson and David D. Yang, "Using the Land to Control the Sea? Chinese Analysts Consider the Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile," *Naval War College Review* (Autumn 2009).

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Robert D. Kaplan, "China's Two Ocean Strategy," in *China's Arrival: A Strategic Framework for a Global Relationship*, ed. Abraham Denmark and Nirav Patel (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, September 2009), 43–58, available at <[www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS%20China's%20Arrival\\_Final%20Report.pdf](http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS%20China's%20Arrival_Final%20Report.pdf)>; and Robert D. Kaplan, "America's Elegant Decline," *The Atlantic* (November 2007), available at <[www.theatlantic.com/doc/200711/america-decline](http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200711/america-decline)>.

<sup>6</sup> Michèle A. Flournoy and Shawn Brimley, "The Contested Commons," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 135 (July 2009).

<sup>7</sup> Thomas J. Christensen, "Posing Problems without Catching Up: China's Rise and Challenges for U.S. Security Policy," *International Security* 25, no. 4 (2001).

<sup>8</sup> Krepinevich and Martinage.

<sup>9</sup> Michael Hoffman, "Schwartz Warns Against Dependence on GPS," *Air Force Times*, January 25, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> *A Question of Balance: Political Context and Military Aspects of the China-Taiwan Dispute*, 170.

<sup>11</sup> Michael O'Hanlon, "Unfinished Business: U.S. Overseas Military Presence in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," Center for a New American Security, June 2008, 42, available at <[www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/06\\_military\\_ohanlon/06\\_military\\_ohanlon.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/06_military_ohanlon/06_military_ohanlon.pdf)>.

<sup>12</sup> See Edward Luttwak, *The Political Uses of Seapower* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).

<sup>13</sup> Nan Li and Christopher Weuve, "China's Aircraft Carrier Ambitions: An Update," *Naval War College Review* (Winter 2010).

# Off and Running

## The Middle East Nuclear Arms Race

By RICHARD L. RUSSELL



Turkish security guards NATO AWACS aircraft between surveillance flights of Turkish airspace, February 2003

ties to the region is dangerously short-sighted. These capabilities could well be converted for military nuclear weapons programs in some shape or form in the next generation.

### Deter Adversaries

Middle Eastern states would look to nuclear weapons to deter regional adversaries. Israel's nuclear weapons program is a prime regional example of this driving factor, and other states may well follow suit. The Israelis, who leveraged their French-provided nuclear power plant at Dimona in the 1960s for its clandestine nuclear weapons program, sought nuclear weapons to deter hostile Arab states. Tel Aviv publicly neither confirms nor denies its nuclear weapons capabilities. As Avner Cohen and William Burr explain, the Israelis have steadfastly maintained that they would not be the "first country in the region to introduce nuclear weapons into the region," a diplomatic nuance meaning openly testing and publicly declaring nuclear weapons.<sup>1</sup> This posture allows the Israelis to have plausible deniability about their nuclear weapons capability while at the same time influencing the strategic thinking of Arab leaders on decisions of war and peace.

The idea that nuclear weapons afforded Israel a deterrent against conventional war has been problematic. Contrary to expectations by nuclear deterrence theory enthusiasts, Israel's thinly veiled nuclear weapons capabilities did not deter Egyptian and Syrian forces from attacking Israel in the 1973 Middle East war.<sup>2</sup> The Israelis in the earliest stages of the 1973 clash suffered severe battlefield losses on the Sinai. Reports have circulated for years that the Israelis were so concerned about an imminent defeat by Egyptian forces that they had readied their nuclear weapons. Israeli nuclear forces in 1973 consisted of French-built Mirage aircraft capable of delivering nuclear bombs and a small force of ballistic missiles armed with nuclear warheads.<sup>3</sup> The Israelis, however, were able to marshal an impressive

Iran's suspected pursuit of nuclear weapons could contribute to a regional nuclear arms race in the Middle East. Nation-states already are hedging their bets that Tehran will one day harbor a nuclear weapons arsenal—even if it is an undeclared one. In the Persian Gulf, the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), led by Saudi Arabia, has publicly announced plans to invest in the nuclear power industry. The GCC members claim that they are hedging their energy needs against future days when their oil reserves are depleted. The GCC, however, probably has in mind sending a not too thinly veiled threat to Iran. They too could follow suit with nuclear weapons programs under the guise of civilian nuclear programs if Tehran does not cease its uranium enrichment activities.

Elsewhere in the Middle East, countries are interested in nuclear power programs that could lay foundations for military nuclear weapons programs. Turkey, a state with one geopolitical foot in Europe and the other in

the Middle East, has showed renewed interest in its nuclear power infrastructure. Egypt, too, has publicly declared its revamped interest in nuclear power technology. It appears that Syria was harboring a clandestine nuclear program until Israel, the first nuclear weapons-capable state in the Middle East, launched airstrikes in the fall 2007 to destroy its North Korean-supplied nuclear reactor.

While Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons could act as a key contributor to a Middle East nuclear arms race, it might not be the only one. There are five overarching factors potentially leading to an appetite for nuclear weapons in the region: to deter adversaries, compensate for conventional military shortcomings, fight wars, garner domestic political power, and win international political power, especially to leverage against the United States. Given this powerful array of determinants for nuclear weapons present and pervasive in the Middle East, the current Western push to market and sell nuclear power infrastructure and capabili-

Dr. Richard L. Russell is Professor of National Security Affairs in the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University and Adjunct Professor of Security Studies in the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University.

conventional military turnaround and would have nearly routed Egyptian forces had it not been for American diplomatic intervention to stop the war. Israel's impressive conventional military reversal alleviated its need to resort to nuclear weapons against Egyptian forces to defend Israel proper.

The public revelation that Iran had a clandestine uranium enrichment program caught the attention of Arab Middle Eastern states. Iran was for nearly two decades working sporadically on uranium enrichment capabilities. The program, which began in the mid-1980s with centrifuge parts and drawings from the "father" of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, A.Q. Khan, was revealed to the world in 2002 by Iranian dissidents. The Iranians had built a facility at Natanz with plans for installing 50,000 centrifuges.<sup>4</sup> The Iranians failed to notify the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of this program despite its obligation under the terms of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which Tehran had signed.

It is probably no coincidence that after Iran's uranium enrichment centrifuge program was exposed in 2002, the most energy-wealthy countries in the world—joined by other states in the Middle East—suddenly decided to diversify their energy sources and invest in nuclear power plants. The Gulf Cooperation Council under Saudi leadership tasked a team in May 2009 to begin the study of peaceful purposes for nuclear power.<sup>5</sup> The Saudis are negotiating with France for the purchase of nuclear technology, and Paris has already signed civilian nuclear deals elsewhere in the Middle East, to include Algeria and Libya.<sup>6</sup> The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is energetically working with both France and the United States to develop its nuclear power industry.<sup>7</sup> South Korea too will be providing aid to the UAE nuclear power program.<sup>8</sup> Kuwait has shown interest in nuclear power cooperation with France, and its emir said in February 2009 that his country is "seriously considering joining the nuclear club but only for peaceful purposes."<sup>9</sup> Jordan in May 2009 signed a nuclear energy cooperation agreement with Russia in which Moscow would provide Amman with power plants, research facilities, and training centers.<sup>10</sup> President Hosni Mubarak in 2007 announced that Egypt would redouble investment in its nuclear power infrastructure.<sup>11</sup> Mubarak signed a nuclear energy deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin in March 2008, giving Russia the go-ahead to bid for building the first of four nuclear power plants in Egypt.<sup>12</sup>

The relatively sudden surge in Arab state interest in nuclear technology after the exposure of Iran's clandestine centrifuge program suggests that they perceive a more acute threat from Iranian nuclear weapons in the future than from Israel's nuclear weapons today. The Arab states, after all, have lived with Israel's veiled nuclear weapons capabilities for decades, but only after Iran's nuclear efforts became public did they move from rhetoric

*the idea that nuclear weapons afforded Israel a deterrent against conventional war has been problematic*

to investment in concrete capabilities. Israeli nuclear weapons were more an affront to Arab prestige than an acute security threat and never sparked a widespread nuclear arms race in the Middle East.

The Arab states undoubtedly fear that nuclear weapons in Iranian hands will bolster Iranian power and influence in the Gulf and Middle East. Nuclear weapons would enable Tehran to even more aggressively support its growing surrogate influence through Shia militias in Iraq, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Hamas in the Palestinian community. The Arab states probably calculate that they would be exceedingly vulnerable to Iranian political coercion and military intimidation. The Arab Gulf states would be especially eager to have nuclear weapons to deter the use of Iranian ballistic missile and nuclear weapons use against them.

Turkey is likely thinking strategically much like the Arab states. Ankara has a working, and even improving, relationship with Iran, but it too will probably want to hedge its bets against a nuclear-armed Tehran in the not distant future. The Turks may well have had this set of calculations in mind with their recent renewed interest in revamping their nuclear power infrastructure.<sup>13</sup> Again, it is probably no coincidence that Turkey publicly announced plans to reinvest in its nuclear power infrastructure not long after the exposure of Iran's uranium enrichment plant at Natanz.

The Turkish General Staff would not want to be in an inferior bargaining position should relations with Iran deteriorate. Some observers might argue that Turkey could rely on its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership for a nuclear security

umbrella to deter Iranian aggression, but that suggestion is likely to be less than satisfactory to the Turkish military. Turkey remembers well that when it prudently turned to NATO for protection from potential Iraqi retaliation in the run-up to the American-British 2003 war against Iraq, Turkey was sternly rebuffed. That experience was a bitter pill to swallow and will argue in favor of a nuclear deterrent against Iran's nuclear stockpile.

Anti-aircraft guns guard Natanz nuclear facility in Iran, 2006



## Backstopping Shortcomings

Another key driver for nuclear weapons in the Middle East would be the desire to plug holes in defenses due to conventional military shortcomings. Even though many Arab states are flush with the most advanced ground, naval, and air weaponry, their conventional militaries suffer from numerous problems. Arab Gulf states, for example, lack strong population bases from which to draw educated and technologically capable soldiers, sailors, and airmen to man their expensive weapons systems and train for modern mobile-conventional warfare. These traits leave these states excessively reliant on foreign contractors to maintain and field their forces. Family and tribal ties, moreover, trump military competence for high command in Arab Gulf states. These states likely would look to nuclear weapons as the "quick fix" for all conventional military shortcomings. They might even calculate that nuclear weapons in the future would relieve Arab Gulf states from the arduous and long-term work needed to improve their conventional military forces that, more often than not, are reflections of the shortcomings of their own cultures, histories, and societies.<sup>14</sup>

Gulf state regimes would be drawn to the allure of nuclear weapons as the ultimate guarantee of their survival in a future military crisis with larger Iranian conventional military forces. The regimes might calculate



that in a future crisis with an Iran armed with nuclear weapons, the United States would be deterred from entering the fray, leaving the Arab Gulf states to fend for themselves.

To ensure that they could hold Iranian targets at risk, Arab Gulf states are likely to be interested in acquiring and modernizing their now limited ballistic missile holdings. The Saudis clandestinely procured intermediate-range CSS-2 ballistic missiles from China in the mid-1980s, and the UAE clandestinely procured Scud missiles from China in 1989.<sup>15</sup> These missiles are old, though, and the UAE and Saudi Arabia would no doubt like more ballistic missiles. Pakistan, China, North Korea, and Russia would be the places for them to shop, and they could offer lucrative sales to countries willing to skirt the Missile Technology Control Regime, a voluntary

The Syrian regime apparently decided to look to nuclear weapons to make up for its conventional military shortcomings. Damascus ran the risk of detection by Israel and was clandestinely assembling a North Korean-supplied nuclear reactor until the Israelis mounted an airstrike and destroyed it in September 2007. The Syrians spent months razing and cleaning up the site before allowing international inspectors to investigate.<sup>16</sup> The Israelis have neither confirmed nor denied the airstrike, an astute diplomatic posture that helped keep the strike from spiraling into a broader Middle East war. Had Israel publicly and blatantly lauded the strike, the bravado could have so humiliated the Damascus regime that it might have retaliated militarily.

Egypt might make a similar strategic calculus in the future. A political convulsion in the region or in Egypt itself could one day

come to shove in a regional crisis. Egyptians would want nuclear weapons to deter Israeli conventional forces from again storming over Egyptian military forces, flooding the Sinai Desert, and threatening to cross the Suez Canal to challenge the survival of Egypt's regime.

### Fighting Wars

Another key determinant for nuclear weapons proliferation in the Middle East is the desire for nuclear weapons to wage war. This view may be startling to observers who judge that nuclear weapons are only good for deterrence and not for warfighting. But the history of nuclear weapons development shows otherwise. The United States and its NATO Allies during the Cold War deployed nuclear weapons in Europe not as some grand deterrent bluff, but because they intended to use them if the Warsaw Pact forces invaded



U.S. Navy (Joseph Kypell)

**BMP-3 armored personnel carrier offloaded in Kuwait as part of Gulf Cooperation Council protective buildup, March 2003**

cooperative effort by Western states to stem the flow of ballistic missile-related technology to states trying to build up their ballistic missile capabilities.

Syria has an acute interest in nuclear weapons to compensate for its conventional military shortcomings in its strategic competition with Israel. Syrian conventional forces have been consistently bested by Israeli conventional forces in the Arab-Israeli wars as well as in clashes in and around Lebanon. Syria's conventional capabilities eroded even more when the Soviet Union collapsed and the Moscow arms pipeline dried up. Moscow under Putin's muscular foreign policy might yet renew major conventional arms supplies to Syria to revamp its conventional forces in the near future. But modern Russian arms alone would not redress Syria's conventional shortcomings against Israeli forces.

*Arab Gulf states lack strong population bases from which to draw educated and technologically capable soldiers, sailors, and airmen to man their expensive weapons systems*

lead to the breakdown of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty to reawaken the bitter security rivalry that was the core of the Arab-Israel wars in the last century. The most well-organized Egyptian political opposition and the most likely to assault the Cairo regime would be the Muslim Brotherhood, which in July 2006 publicly called on the Mubarak regime to develop a nuclear deterrent.<sup>17</sup>

This suggests that a nuclear weapons capability would be high on the policy agenda for a Muslim Brotherhood-led government in Cairo. Egypt, unlike Syria, is well equipped with modern conventional weaponry thanks to decades of American security assistance. But Egyptian society and its armed forces suffer from shortcomings that prevent the full exploitation of the modern weaponry's capabilities, leaving Egypt's conventional forces outclassed by Israel's conventional forces.

Egypt could turn to nuclear weapons in the first instance to deter Israeli nuclear forces and in the second instance to counterbalance Israeli conventional military capabilities. In a future regional security environment mired with Egyptian and Israeli tensions, Cairo would want nuclear weapons to reassure itself that Israel could not use the threat of nuclear and conventional military superiorities to politically coerce Egypt. Cairo might see nuclear weapons as the ultimate security guarantee should push

Western Europe with conventional forces. The United States and its Allies worried that Warsaw Pact forces outnumbered and outgunned NATO forces, so the Alliance would have to resort to tactical nuclear weapons to blunt a conventional invasion.<sup>18</sup>

Middle Eastern states will probably be making similar calculations. Saudi Arabia, for example, might come to think that the early use of nuclear weapons against Iranian forces invading through Kuwait would be wiser statecraft than letting those forces get an operational foothold in the oil-rich Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, where a largely Shia population is alienated from the Sunni Saudi regime and is sympathetic to Iran. Kuwait itself has no geopolitical buffer zone and might want to resort to nuclear weapons before numerically superior Iranian forces cross into Kuwaiti territory. If the Kuwaitis were to hesitate in employing nuclear weapons, they would risk losing their country as they did in Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion. The Saudis and Kuwaitis, on top of these calculations, might judge that they themselves would need to resort to nuclear weapons to thwart an Iranian invasion because the United States would not want to put its forces in the line of fire as it did against Iraq in 1991 and 2003 because of the threat of Iran targeting American forces with nuclear weapons.

The Iranians are certainly aware of American conventional military prowess and would not seek a fair fight in a clash with the United States. Tehran watched American and British forces dispatch Saddam's regime in 3 weeks, an impressive task that Iran was not able to accomplish after 8 brutal years of war with Iraq, which sapped its national strength. The Iranians in the future, especially the Revolutionary Guard, might use nuclear weapons against American conventional military forces should they fear for the survival of the Tehran regime. They might calculate that Iranian nuclear weapons use would shock the Americans and compel them to stand down their military operations. They might additionally figure that the United States would exercise restraint and not retaliate with nuclear weapons against Iran given Washington's political interest in maintaining the nonuse of nuclear weapons norm and the American avoidance of inflicting civilian casualties in war.

Syria and Egypt too might find themselves embroiled in a future Arab-Israeli war. If faced with the threat of Israeli forces capturing Damascus or Cairo, the Syrian and Egyptian regimes could calculate that their use of nuclear weapons against Israeli conventional forces on the battlefield would not cross the threshold for Israeli nuclear weapons retaliation against their capitals and population centers. These would be risky calculations to be sure, but they are plausible, especially during crises in which authoritarian regimes believe their survival is at stake.

### Political Power at Home

Other pressures for nuclear weapons come from domestic politics and the struggle for power inside Middle East nation-states. Often overlooked is the fact that armed forces and domestic communities and interest blocks become influential advocates for nuclear weapons programs in decisionmaking circles. As Scott Sagan points out, a state's nuclear energy establishment includes civilian reactors and laboratories, military elements, politicians, and the public, who strongly support nuclear weapons acquisition. These are all important drivers of proliferation.<sup>19</sup>

Iran's Revolutionary Guard is undoubtedly a powerful domestic advocate for nuclear weapons. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is a Revolutionary Guard veteran, and under his leadership, Guard commanders have filled increasingly important domestic political and

economic posts to increase the institution's overall influence in government decisionmaking. The Revolutionary Guard operates most of Iran's ballistic missiles and would likely control Iran's future nuclear weapons.<sup>20</sup> When push comes to shove in government power corridors, it has vested interests in seeing that the nuclear weapons program proceeds and, along with it, the Revolutionary Guard's status and prestige in Tehran politics.

Wide swaths of public opinion also support Iran's pursuit of nuclear technology. It would not be too much of a leap to assume that public opinion would be proud of a government that demonstrates technological prowess with the detonation of a nuclear

convulsions over the next 25 years and would view nuclear weapons as a hedge against mob civil violence and coups. Syria's minority Alawite regime, for example, might have had an internal security threat contingency on its mind in working on its clandestine nuclear program with North Korea. Saudi Arabia might become gravely threatened by al Qaeda Sunni-based insurgents or Hizballah Shia insurgents in the heavily Shia-populated Eastern Province. The royal families in the small Arab Gulf states, especially those with deep financial pockets such as the UAE and Kuwait, could see nuclear weapons as their aces in the hole to guarantee their survival and their control over the political weight of even larger

*the United States and its NATO Allies deployed nuclear weapons in Europe not as some grand deterrent bluff, but because they intended to use them if Warsaw Pact forces invaded Western Europe with conventional forces*

device. Iran's development of nuclear power is a source of great domestic pride and nationalism. As Iran scholar Ray Takeyh observes, "Far from being a source of restraint, the emerging popular sentiment is that, as a great civilization with a long history, Iran has a right to acquire a nuclear capability."<sup>21</sup> The pride that swells from Iran's nuclear activities helps to temper public frustrations with a deteriorating economy and lack of political freedoms. Takeyh notes on this score that the "recent disclosures of the sophisticated nature of Iran's nuclear program have been a source of pride for a citizenry accustomed to the revolution's failures and setbacks."<sup>22</sup>

Many regimes in the Middle East are likely to feel threatened by internal political

populations of expatriates and foreign workers on which many government and private sector functions depend. Egypt could face a tumultuous political transition after President Mubarak's death, and nuclear weapons would be useful instruments to rally nationalism and garner internal support for a new regime.

### Leverage on Washington

A factor that looms large behind Middle Eastern aspirations for nuclear weapons is power and influence—beyond nuclear and conventional deterrence and warfighting capabilities—in regional and international politics. The Iranians would want to parlay a nuclear weapons inventory to politically coerce Saudi Arabia and the



LTG Ricardo Sanchez and Ambassador L. Paul Bremer brief media on capture of Saddam Hussein, December 2003

U.S. Air Force (Steven Pearsall)

Arab Gulf states into appeasing Iranian security policy and distancing themselves from American power in the Gulf and Middle East. Saudi Arabia would want to tap a nuclear stockpile to counterbalance Iran's nuclear weapons inventory to maintain its political stature as leader of the Sunni Muslim world against Iran as the leader of the Shia Muslim world. The smaller Arab Gulf states—the UAE and Kuwait in particular—would want to use nuclear weapons inventories to maintain their political autonomies from both Saudi Arabia and Iran in the event that the United States is compelled to lessen its military and political presence in the region in light of the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Egypt, as well as Syria and Algeria, would see nuclear weapons as instruments for stopping the erosion of their political power in regional and international politics. These nations have been especially frustrated to see power shifting from northern Africa and the Levant to the Gulf. Egypt has long seen itself as the center of Arab politics, but frets that it is being eclipsed by Saudi and Gulf power. Egypt would look to nuclear weapons to reassert its stature as the preeminent Arab power. Cairo would not want to be eclipsed by Shia power bolstered by Tehran's nuclear weapons, which could be parlayed into more aggressive Iranian support for Hizballah and Palestinian militant Islamists such as Islamic Jihad and Hamas to put Iran front and center in Middle East politics. Algerian officials reportedly considered nuclear power as part of a plan to transform Algeria into a regional superpower, and nuclear weapons could have played a part in this strategy, according to nuclear weapons expert David Albright.<sup>23</sup>

Middle Eastern states would be especially keen to parlay nuclear weapons into influence abroad with the United States, which is a final determinant for regional nuclear weapons proliferation. Middle Eastern states have no doubt noticed that what captures acute American attention is nuclear weapons proliferation. They see, for example, that two of the poorest per capita countries in the world, Pakistan and North Korea, are able to seize the attention of American policymakers and exert an influence on international politics well above their economic "throw weights." As for Iran, Karim Sadjadpour notes a private conversation with a former member of Iran's nuclear negotiating team during which he opined that Iran's nuclear program

was not so important until it became important to the United States. The Iranian official responded, "That's absolutely right."<sup>24</sup>

Syria, with a bleak economic picture comparable to those of Pakistan and North Korea, probably harbored illusions of one day presenting the world with a nuclear fait accompli. Damascus could have parlayed nuclear weapons capabilities for the attention of and influence on American policy in the Middle East. That tack would have been in keeping with Syria's longstanding regional role as the "spoiler" with its support of Palestinian and Shia Hizballah opposition, and more recently of Sunni jihadists in Iraq, to make sure that no major regional agreements could go through without Damascus's approval.

Egypt could think along similar lines. Cairo sees its old position at the center of Arab politics deteriorating as Jordan plays a greater role in regional issues, Saudi Arabia

*the pride that swells from  
Iran's nuclear activities helps  
to temper public frustrations  
with a deteriorating economy  
and lack of political freedoms*

increasingly exerts a leadership role based on wealth and stature, and Iran strengthens its regional role in the Gulf and the Levant. Cairo could parlay its nuclear power infrastructure into a military nuclear weapons program to redress Egypt's sliding prestige in the region against Israel, Arab states, and Iran. Egyptian leaders might calculate that the peace treaty with Israel would protect it from Israeli military strikes should a clandestine Egyptian nuclear weapons program be exposed. The Egyptians could present the United States with a fait accompli nuclear weapons capability and use it as leverage to gain more American security assistance for Egypt. Cairo could argue that unless Washington ratchets up its military security assistance, Egypt would have to move from a minimalist to a maximalist nuclear weapons inventory.

Algeria could reawaken its nuclear weapons program to extract American policy attention. Algiers might find itself in the next generation under renewed and even more strident militant Islamic opposition than in the 1990s. Algerian officials could argue that they need major infusions of American military and security assistance to make sure that nuclear weapons remain secure in

secular Arab political hands in Algiers and not fall into the hands of the likes of al Qaeda of northern Africa. The Algerians might take pointers on this score from Pakistan's extraction of generous economic, military, security, and intelligence assistance from the United States because Washington is increasingly uneasy about the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons inventory in light of the Taliban and al Qaeda inroads in Pakistan.

### Nonproliferation Policy Implications

Middle East states will be under heavy pressure in the future to convert civilian nuclear power programs into clandestine military nuclear weapons programs given the key strategic factors at play in the region. The international community is putting itself at risk by essentially replaying the French mistake of supplying Israel and Iraq with ostensibly civilian nuclear power reactors that in the last century were stealthily harnessed for military nuclear weapons programs. Even if Western nuclear technology is not directly harnessed for military nuclear weapons programs in the near term, the expertise and technology could be easily diverted to the military over the longer run. The United States, France, and other Western countries, for example, made that mistake in supplying South Africa with civilian nuclear technology and assistance. Although that assistance did not directly build South Africa's nuclear weapons before the 1990 abandonment, it substantially increased the technical competence of Pretoria's nuclear engineers, technicians, and scientists who made up South Africa's nuclear weapons intellectual capital.<sup>25</sup>

Some observers object to this line of reasoning and counter that Arab states would not dare risk jeopardizing their bilateral security relationships with the United States by embarking on clandestine nuclear weapons programs. But these programs could be small and difficult for Washington to uncover. The South African case illustrates how medium-sized powers such as the Arab states could nurture nuclear weapons programs that could go undetected. Pretoria's bomb program in the 1980s employed only 100 people, of whom about 40 were directly involved in the weapons program and about 20 built South Africa's small nuclear arsenal. By the time the program was cancelled in 1990, the work force still only had about 300 people.<sup>26</sup> International safeguards under the auspices of the IAEA would be little more than speed bumps to determined Middle Eastern



proliferators. With minimal cunning, they could play along with IAEA inspections and hide military nuclear weapons programs much as North Korea and Iraq did in the past and Iran is doing today.

The Arab Gulf states are relying on technical assistance from France, the United States, China, Russia, and others to get their nuclear power infrastructures up and running. As they do, these Gulf states are training a cadre of domestic talent that over a generation could be ready to fill foreign shoes and assume the reins of the nuclear power infrastructure, especially if Arab Gulf states withdraw from IAEA safeguards and the Non-Proliferation Treaty and shift their civilian programs to military nuclear weapons programs. Emirati officials, for example, readily admit today that they are developing domestic talent to run and maintain nuclear reactors by creating nuclear science and engineering degree programs at the country's largest technical school.<sup>27</sup> One cannot help but suspect that with a healthy dose of "street smarts," the UAE and other Middle East strategists can see how far Iran has progressed in its nuclear program and are determined to keep pace even though they are getting a late start. **JFQ**

The author would like to thank Henry Sokolski, the Non-Proliferation Policy Education Center's Executive Director, for prompting this article.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Avner Cohen and William Burr, "The Untold Story of Israel's Bomb," *The Washington Post*, April 30, 2006, B1, B3.

<sup>2</sup> Ward Wilson, "The Myth of Nuclear Deterrence," *Nonproliferation Review* 15, no. 3 (November 2008), 434.

<sup>3</sup> Patrick Tyler, *A World of Trouble: The White House and the Middle East—From the Cold War to the War on Terror* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2009), 141.

<sup>4</sup> William J. Broad and David E. Sanger, "As Crisis Brews, Iran Hits Bumps in Atomic Path," *The New York Times*, March 5, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> "GCC Work Team on Peaceful Nuclear Energy Use Meets," *Oman Daily Observer*, May 20, 2009.

<sup>6</sup> "Saudi-French Civil N-Pact 'Soon,'" *Saudi Gazette*, May 11, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> James Kanter, "France Set to Announce UAE Nuclear Deal," *International Herald Tribune*, January 14, 2008; Jay Solomon and Margaret Coker, "Oil-Rich Arab State Pushes Nuclear Bid with U.S. Help," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 2, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> "South Korean Cabinet Approves Peaceful Nuclear Accord with UAE," Kuwait News Agency, June 17, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> "Kuwait Eyes Civilian Nuclear Power Project with French Help," *The Peninsula* (Doha), February 19, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> "Russia, Jordan Sign Nuclear Cooperation Agreement," *Haaretz* (Tel Aviv), May 23, 2009.

<sup>11</sup> "Egypt Unveils Nuclear Plants Plan," BBC News, October 29, 2007.

<sup>12</sup> "Russia-Egypt Nuclear Deal Signed," BBC News, March 25, 2008.

<sup>13</sup> Karl Vick, "Energy, Iran Spur Turkey's Revival of Nuclear Plants," *The Washington Post*, March 7, 2006.

<sup>14</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of Arab military shortcomings, see Kenneth M. Pollack, *Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948–1991* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002).

<sup>15</sup> Richard L. Russell, *Weapons Proliferation and War in the Greater Middle East: Strategic Contest* (London: Routledge, 2006), 64.

<sup>16</sup> Jay Solomon, "Syria Signals It Will Stop U.N. Nuclear Inspectors," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 4, 2008.

<sup>17</sup> James A. Russell, "A Tipping Point Realized? Nuclear Proliferation in the Persian Gulf and Middle East," *Contemporary Security Policy* 29, no. 3 (December 2008), 530.

<sup>18</sup> For an insightful treatment of nuclear weapons strategy in Cold War Europe, see Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 288–293.

<sup>19</sup> Scott D. Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb," *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1996/1997), 63–65.

<sup>20</sup> Anthony H. Cordesman and Martin Kleiber, *Iran's Military Forces and Warfighting Capabilities: The Threat to the Northern Gulf* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007), 73.

<sup>21</sup> Ray Takeyh, "Iran Builds the Bomb," *Survival* 46, no. 4 (November 2004), 58.

<sup>22</sup> Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006), 154.

<sup>23</sup> David Albright and Corey Hinderstein, "Algeria: Big Deal in the Desert?" *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 57, no. 3 (May–June 2001), 47.

<sup>24</sup> Quoted in Theodoros Tsakiris, ed., "Iranian-American Relations under the Early Obama Administration: Virtual Dialogue," *Middle East Economic Survey Research Special Report*, April 15, 2009.

<sup>25</sup> J.W. de Villiers, Roger Jardine, and Mitchell Reiss, "Why South Africa Gave Up the Bomb," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 5 (November–December 1993), 105.

<sup>26</sup> David Albright, "South Africa and the Affordable Bomb," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 50, no. 4 (July 1994).

<sup>27</sup> Jay Solomon and Margaret Coker, "Oil-Rich Arab State Pushes Nuclear Bid with U.S. Help," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 2, 2009.



**NEW**  
from **NDU Press**  
for the Institute for  
National Strategic Studies



Institute for National Strategic Studies  
Middle East Strategic Perspectives Series, No. 1

*Nuclear Politics in Iran*  
Edited by Judith S. Yaphé

The Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) has launched a new series of publications called Strategic Perspectives to examine the impact of critical issues and developments in key regions of the world and on U.S. security interests. The Middle East Strategic Perspectives Series begins with *Nuclear Politics in Iran*, a collection of analyses on the unintended consequences of Iran's nuclear policy for its domestic and international relations.

Focusing on the nuclearization of Iranian politics, society, and security, three prominent scholars examine the emergence of an Iranian nuclear political strategy. Farideh Farhi opens with an examination of the rhetorical instruments used in the shaping of public opinion between 2001 and 2007. Bahman Baktiari next explores how Iran's leaders use Western opposition to the country's nuclear program to validate their quest for international legitimacy and to generate domestic national unity. Finally, Anoushiravan Ehteshami analyzes the troubled presidential election of June 2009, finding that the relationship between state and society and between the forces that make up the Iranian power elite will never be the same again.

Visit the NDU Press Web site  
for more information on publications  
at [ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu)

# Through a *Jingzi*, Darkly

By DEAN CHENG

**F**or much of the past two decades, the concern of many in the U.S. Government and throughout Asia has been the impact of China's growing economy and concomitant political and military power—that is, the focus has been on the impact of China's success on the region and the world.

The very success that has led so many to worry about how China might exploit it, however, has also led to a variety of contradictions and tensions within that country. These are generating significant challenges to the leadership. With the current economic crisis, many of these issues are now coming

to a head. It is therefore appropriate to ask the question, "What would be the impact of Chinese failure?"

## The Legitimacy of the Party

When Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) first came to power, their claim to legitimacy (beyond having defeated the Kuomintang) was that they would allow the country to "stand up." China, under the rule of the CCP, would finally cast off what has been termed the "century of

---

Dean Cheng is a Research Fellow at the Heritage Foundation for Chinese Political and Security Affairs.



PLAN marines stand in formation during port visit by USS Juneau

U.S. Marine Corps (J.J. Harper)



humiliation,” when it lost control of its own destiny. To this end, China would develop the economic, political, industrial, and military wherewithal to resist foreign incursion, garner international respect, and control its own territory. At the same time, the people were promised a better life.

During Mao’s quarter-century of rule, he did succeed in elevating the place of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in the international order. Under Mao, it was no longer a weak state at the mercy of various neighbors, but a more unified nation that was not easily intimidated by either the United States or the Soviet Union. This progress was achieved in large part through forced draft industrialization. From a largely agrarian society with a minimal industrial base, Mao transformed the nation into a major industrial power armed with a nuclear arsenal.

Even as Mao was restructuring the economy, he was also preparing for war. He was a fervent believer in ideological struggle and was convinced that China was confronted with a global political situation marked by “war and revolution.” This necessitated constant preparations for “early war, major war, nuclear war.” Consequently, he focused the economy on heavy industrial production and oriented it toward preparing for a massive, immediate conflict. Factories were scattered throughout the country, sacrificing efficiency for survivability, in order to support the postnuclear conflict that Mao assumed was imminent.

The economic inefficiencies were compounded by the domestic ideological and political campaigns Mao instituted at enormous human cost. These included such disasters as the Great Leap Forward (1957–1961), which led to the deaths of some 30 million by famine, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), in which China came close to disintegrating.<sup>1</sup>

When Mao died in 1976, Deng Xiaoping assumed the role of paramount leader and fundamentally altered the direction of the PRC. From the strategic perspective, Deng believed that, instead of “war and revolution,” the “keynote of the times” was marked by “peace and development.” This shift meant the PRC no longer had to be constantly preparing for imminent war. Instead, it could afford to reallocate its investments away from heavy industry and military production toward light industry and consumer goods. This became a cornerstone of Deng’s program of “reform and opening.”

At the same time, Deng introduced a much more pragmatic approach toward domestic governance, reducing the role of ideology in favor of “seeking truth from facts.” The emphasis was on pragmatism and stability, rather than grandiose schemes, in order to provide the conditions necessary for sustained economic development. As Deng himself observed, “The issue confronting China comes down to the need for stability. Without a stable environment, nothing can be achieved, and what has already been attained will be lost.”<sup>2</sup>

*Deng introduced a much more pragmatic approach toward domestic governance, reducing the role of ideology in favor of “seeking truth from facts”*

In essence, Deng made a tacit bargain with the Chinese population. The CCP would jettison ideology and the attendant chaos and turmoil, doing no more than pay lip service to communism. Instead, it would focus on internal improvement and garnering international respect. The average Chinese could expect to see noticeable improvements, not only in their

own standard of living, but also that of their children. In exchange, the Party would retain sole control over the instruments of national power.

As a result of Deng’s policies, the economy markedly improved. The results in the first decade of reform were impressive by almost any measure. By the time of the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, national income had nearly quadrupled, from 301 billion *yuan* (or *renminbi*) in 1978 to 1,153 billion *yuan*. Average per capita income for rural peasants had grown from 134 *yuan* to 545 *yuan*, while that for urban residents had grown even more, from 316 to 1,119 *yuan*.<sup>3</sup> Nor was this simply statistical legerdemain. The average Chinese, who had once aspired simply to own wristwatches and bicycles, now had access to refrigerators and television sets. Deng’s policies succeeded in improving the lot of many Chinese, both urban and rural.

At the same time, however, the Party would brook no challenges to its authority, as was clearly demonstrated in 1989. The unrest and the response by the Ministry of Public Security were not limited to Beijing but were felt nationwide.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, it is worth recalling that current President Hu Jintao was party secretary of Tibet in 1989 and authorized martial law to maintain order at the time.<sup>5</sup>

The bargain was sustained by Deng’s successor Jiang Zemin. Jiang, like Deng, emphasized stability, stating, “Stability is the prerequisite for reform and development. Development must have stability in the political and social environment.”<sup>6</sup> At the same time, however, in recognition of the shifts in the Chinese polity generated by Deng’s reforms, Jiang extended Party membership to the new entrepreneurial class. Now, one was not compelled to choose between becoming rich and being a Party member—one could do both.



Container trucks en route to shipping terminal in Shenzhen Special Economic Zone in southern China



Migrant workers at railroad station in Haidian district of Beijing



Beijing protest of bombing of Chinese embassy in Belgrade, 1999



Both Jiang and his successor Hu Jintao have sought to maintain economic development and have by and large succeeded. China's economy is currently the third largest and is likely to become second within the next year. It is one of the largest producers of coal, steel, and gold.<sup>7</sup> Its auto factories are now the busiest in the world.<sup>8</sup>

### The Price of Success

As Chinese (and Western) analyses recognize, however, as a society becomes wealthier, pressures are generated that increase instability. Chinese analyses identify four broad sources of instability: social, economic, political, and cultural.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps most prominent today are the economic and social concerns.

Chinese analysts see economic issues as rooted in the shift away from a planned economy dominated by agriculture to a more industrial, market-oriented one.<sup>10</sup> Along with this shift comes growing economic inequality. China today has over 100 billionaires (based on dollar equivalent holdings), while at the same time, tens of millions are calculated by the China National Bureau of Statistics as living in poverty.<sup>11</sup> By providing more opportunities for people to improve their lives, China's economic success has also led to a widening gap between the more successful and the less fortunate.

Complicating matters, and marking the overlap of economic and social concerns, is the regional disparity in economic growth. The coastal regions were among the first to benefit from economic reform, with the creation of special economic zones designed to attract foreign investment. These have seen the greatest leap in standards of living and general levels of wealth.

By contrast, the inland provinces have yet to share in the higher stages of economic development. The China National Bureau of Statistics in 2004 concluded that 58.6 percent of China's poor lived in 12 western regions. Among the 31 provinces, 7 had 5 to 10 percent of their populations living in poverty and 3 had over 10 percent, including a province that registered 15.6 percent.<sup>12</sup> Those at the bottom are all inland provinces.

This disparity drives the massive flows of itinerant labor in the PRC. Estimated at some 150 to 200 million, this floating population moves from the countryside to the cities in search of temporary or permanent work.<sup>13</sup> It is the core of an essential pool of

low-wage labor. At the same time, however, it also exposes peasants from the countryside to a different standard of living that they are unlikely to attain for themselves.

Exacerbating the disparity of economic power is the issue of political corruption. As the U.S. Department of State noted in 2009, "Chinese leaders acknowledge that China has a very serious corruption problem."<sup>14</sup> This echoed an earlier U.S. assessment, which reported that Chinese officials had investigated more than 32,000 individuals accused of corruption and found over half to be guilty.<sup>15</sup> The consequences of such corruption go beyond bribery. The Chinese handling of melamine-contaminated milk powder (where milk powder found to be contaminated in 2008 was repackaged and sold until 2010) is suggestive of the range of social, political, and economic stresses.<sup>16</sup>

All of these factors strike at the legitimacy of the rule of the CCP. Economic disparity calls into question the validity of the implicit bargain; if the majority of the citizenry, whether they are rural peasants still on the farm or migrant laborers, cannot hope to improve their lives, then the CCP's claim to power becomes suspect. Similarly, corruption involves not only bribery, but also failure to safeguard the lives of Chinese citizens from a variety of dangers such as melamine, chemical waste products, and substandard construction. In particular, threats to children are likely to arouse a reaction since many families are likely to have only one child.<sup>17</sup>

ued to improve. This level of growth is essential in order for the economy to employ the millions of young men who reach working age every year.<sup>20</sup> Failure to create sufficient jobs, Chinese officials acknowledge, is the factor most likely to lead to social unrest.<sup>21</sup>

All of this has been called into question, however, over the past 2 years. A combination of global economic downturn and a turning away from the fundamentals of economic reform and liberalization has resulted in a slowing down of the Chinese economy.<sup>22</sup> In response, Beijing has engaged in massive stimulus spending in order for the government to claim economic growth in the essential 5 to 8 percent range.<sup>23</sup>

Such measures, however, have not entirely solved the problem. The global nature of the recession has meant that the demand for Chinese goods has dropped worldwide. This has led to both foreign and domestic companies reducing their work forces.<sup>24</sup> Consequently, millions of migrant laborers have had to return to their villages, unable to find work in the cities.

This situation will only get worse if the economic downturn is prolonged. Under such circumstances, it is reasonable to expect that the Chinese authorities will have even more difficulty maintaining control, as the fundamental social contract frays. If the CCP is unable to provide sufficient jobs for its workforce, and is unable to fight corruption or ameliorate inequality, then the ability of the Party to remain in power is called into question.

---

*if the majority of the citizenry cannot hope to improve their lives, then the Chinese Communist Party's claim to power becomes suspect*

---

The population has reacted to these internal pressures by protesting in ever larger numbers. The number of "mass incidents" has steadily grown, from 8,700 in 1993 to 10,000 in 1994, 32,000 in 1999, 58,000 in 2003, and 74,000 in 2004.<sup>18</sup> As one Chinese study examining the causes of "mass incidents" bluntly observed, "The current expansion of mass incidents, [and] the adverse consequences they have created, have become the salient issue affecting social stability."<sup>19</sup>

For much of the first decade of the new century, this growing unrest was still at the margins. So long as the economy continued to expand at 5 to 8 percent annually, domestic standards of living for many Chinese contin-

### Potential Responses

For the CCP, there would appear to be only a limited set of choices, none especially palatable. Least likely would be a liberalization of Chinese politics in order to accommodate those elements of society that are most unhappy. Indeed, the CCP's key lesson from the collapse of the Soviet Union would seem to be that the Soviet Communist Party had lost the will to rule.<sup>25</sup> The CCP is intent on avoiding that mistake, and has therefore opposed even moderate political reform.<sup>26</sup>

Rather than conciliation, history suggests that the Chinese leadership is far more likely to take a hard line against any who would challenge its rule. That is how it dealt

with the protestors in Tiananmen Square in 1989, and more recently in Tibet in 2008 and Xinjiang in 2009. Beijing has clearly demonstrated that it is prepared to go to extreme measures to deal with open dissension. Yet increasing internal controls can likely only go so far. The CCP, as noted above, is already confronted with growing numbers of “mass incidents.” Chinese leaders have already responded by increasing surveillance and attempting to crack down on potential leaders of protests.<sup>27</sup> Thus, in many ways, the easier measures of internal control have already been undertaken.

A different option for the CCP would be to invoke nationalism to rally popular support around itself. Such a move, however, would require a centerpiece upon which to focus attention. One possibility would be to invoke national unity against separatist movements in Tibet and Xinjiang. An essential aspect of CCP legitimacy is the ability of Beijing to exercise sovereignty over its territory. Such a move, moreover, would also implicitly play to Han ethnocentrism, as these regions are dominated by the Tibetan and Uighur ethnic minorities.<sup>28</sup>

Alternatively, Beijing may direct its nationalism outward. The most proximate issue would be the perennial question of Taiwan. Beijing has never renounced the option of using force against the island. Moreover, the issue of sovereignty is perhaps most salient with regard to the island's status, as it was among the territories that were lost to foreign intervention during the century of humiliation.

At the same time, however, Taiwan is also much more risky. Taipei has more international standing than either Lhasa or Urumqi. Furthermore, the United States, under the Taiwan Relations Act, has a commitment to Taiwan in a way that is not replicated to any other part of China. Any conflict involving the island would likely lead to a confrontation with the United States.

It is therefore possible that Beijing may consider Taiwan to be too risky an objective (especially given the additional difficulties attendant with conducting operations across the Taiwan Strait in the face of significant resistance). To this end, there are a host of other unresolved border issues that Beijing might choose to exploit in order to generate nationalist fervor. These include:

- the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, where China is a claimant along with Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Brunei
- the Senkaku/Diaoyutai islands, between Taiwan and Okinawa
- Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh, on the Sino-Indian border.

Another possibility, given the growth in the Chinese navy and the acquisition of at least rudimentary expeditionary capabilities, is that Beijing may choose to be more interventionist, without necessarily seizing territory. For example, should ethnic Chinese in any neighbor countries be the subject of ethnic cleansing or violence, it is conceivable that Beijing might use its newfound capabilities to intervene on their behalf, either by helping to evacuate them or by creating safe zones for them. This could well be styled as intervention on behalf of ethnic compatriots. It would be an unprecedented use of Chinese military power, but would be less risky, and could generate less international opprobrium, than an attempt to secure disputed territory by force.

Finally, there is some chance that the CCP might fail to cope with domestic unrest. Past instances of Chinese crisis management, at least as reflected in such events as the EP-3 incident in 2001 and the bombing of the

Chinese Embassy in Belgrade in 1999, suggest that Chinese authorities have difficulty responding to rapidly evolving contingencies. A confluence of crises, such as domestic unrest coupled with external confrontations, might therefore affect the ability of Beijing to exercise control over the situation.

*the United States, under the Taiwan Relations Act, has a commitment to Taiwan in a way that is not replicated to any other part of China*

In this regard, it is possible that the central government's harsh reactions to the recent protests in Xinjiang and Tibet seek to ensure that Beijing is not, in fact, seen as unable to cope with emerging crises. By publicly suppressing these protests, the CCP may be sending a signal to the citizens, and especially to potential and actual dissidents, that the central authorities are prepared to use force to maintain order and retain power.

### Implications for the United States

While much attention has been paid in U.S. Government circles to how to handle China's rise, it is also important to consider how the United States should deal with a failing

U.S. Navy (Alan D. Monyelle)



EP-3 Aries crewmembers detained after collision with PLAN fighter arrive in Guam, April 2001

China. Of special importance is dissuading the CCP from believing that it can engage in externally oriented activities in order to distract its population from internal concerns.

This is essential, as the externally oriented options all hold significant risks of escalation. The number of claimants to the Spratly Islands, for example, makes it one of the few potential issues in Asia that might ignite a regional conflict rather than just a bilateral one. Moreover, the islands straddle some of the main shipping routes to Northeast Asia. Any use of force in that area could affect the flow of oil to Japan and the Republic of Korea.

In the case of the territorial disputes between India and the PRC, the legacy of the 1962 Sino-Indian war has meant that India is extremely sensitive to the security of its northern borders. Chinese claims to Tawang, rooted in the larger issues of control over the whole of historical Tibet and discomfiture with the Dalai Lama, have already led to Indian reinforcement of its border garrisons.<sup>29</sup> The potential for conflict between two nuclear-armed states, each with large conventional militaries as well, cannot be faced with equanimity.

For the United States, then, it is important not only to engage in contingency planning with key allies about what to do in the event of Chinese failure, but also to maintain current security relationships, and do so publicly. It is essential that the Chinese authorities are under no illusion that they can safely engage in nationalist activities to distract their population and retain power.

This is not to suggest that the United States should seek to exacerbate Chinese internal tensions. Instability in a nuclear-armed state, much less in one of the world's three largest economies, is undesirable at best. Indeed, such reassurances are also crucial for the United States, in preparing for the potential of Chinese failure. Just as Beijing should not believe that it can exploit foreign relations, it should also not labor under the wrongful belief that its situation is due to external machinations. Ultimately, whether China succeeds or fails is a function of the Chinese themselves. The United States should not allow itself to be seen as either a scapegoat or an enabler. **JFQ**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For further details, see Jasper Becker, *Hungry Ghosts* (New York: Free Press, 1996); and Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last*

*Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> China Administrative Management Society Study Group, *China Mass Incidents: Causes and Policies* (Beijing: National Academy of Administration Publishing House, 2009), 001.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Fewsmith, *Dilemmas of Reform in China* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Liang Zhang, Andrew J. Nathan, Perry Link, and Orville Schell, *The Tiananmen Papers* (New York: Public Affairs Publishing, 2001), 392–416.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., xviii; and Edward Cody, “Backstage Role of China’s Army in Tibet Unrest Is a Contrast to 1989,” *The Washington Post*, April 13, 2008, available at <[www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/04/12/AR2008041202215.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/04/12/AR2008041202215.html)>.

<sup>6</sup> China Administrative Management Society Study Group, 001.

<sup>7</sup> Laura Mandaro, “China Pushes to Top as World’s Largest Gold Miners,” January 17, 2008, available at <[www.marketwatch.com/story/china-now-worlds-largest-gold-producer-foreign-miners-at-door](http://www.marketwatch.com/story/china-now-worlds-largest-gold-producer-foreign-miners-at-door)>; World Steel Association, “Crude Steel Statistics, Monthly Statistics,” available at <[www.worldsteel.org/?action=stats&type=steel&period=la](http://www.worldsteel.org/?action=stats&type=steel&period=la) test>; and World Coal Institute, “Top Ten Hard Coal Producers (2008e),” available at <[www.worldcoal.org/coal/coal-mining/](http://www.worldcoal.org/coal/coal-mining/)>.

<sup>8</sup> “China: World’s Biggest Auto Producer, Consumer,” *China Daily*, January 12, 2010, available at <[www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2010-01/12/content\\_9309129.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2010-01/12/content_9309129.htm)>.

<sup>9</sup> Drawn from China Administrative Management Society Study Group, 003, 006–008.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 003.

<sup>11</sup> “China’s Growing Economy Mints Billionaires,” *The New York Times*, October 14, 2009, available at <[www.nytimes.com/2009/10/14/business/global/14rich.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/14/business/global/14rich.html)>; and China National Bureau of Statistics calculations are based on minimum food consumption and percentage of consumption that is food (2004 statistics). Rural Survey Organization of the China National Bureau of Statistics (RSOCNBS), “Poverty Statistics in China,” paper presented at the 2004 International Conference on Official Poverty Statistics Methodology and Comparability, October 4–6, 2004, available at <[www.nscb.gov.ph/poverty/conference/papers/4\\_poverty%20statistics%20in%20china.pdf](http://www.nscb.gov.ph/poverty/conference/papers/4_poverty%20statistics%20in%20china.pdf)>.

<sup>12</sup> RSOCNBS.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew Scheineson, *China’s Internal Migrants* (Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Relations, May 14, 2009), available at <[www.cfr.org/publication/12943/](http://www.cfr.org/publication/12943/)>.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of State, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, vol. I, *Country Reports* (Washington, DC: Department of State, February 27, 2009), available at <[www.state.gov/p/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2009/vol1/116520.htm](http://www.state.gov/p/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2009/vol1/116520.htm)>.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Department of State, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, vol. I, *Drug and Chemical Control* (Washington, DC: Department of State,

March 2006), available at <[http://beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn/incsr06\\_chn.html](http://beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn/incsr06_chn.html)>.

<sup>16</sup> Jane Byrne, “Chinese Dairies Shut Down on Melamine Discovery,” *AP-FoodTechnology.com*, February 8, 2010, available at <[www.ap-foodtechnology.com/Processing/Chinese-dairies-shut-down-on-melamine-discovery](http://www.ap-foodtechnology.com/Processing/Chinese-dairies-shut-down-on-melamine-discovery)>, and Rory Harrington, “China Forced to Relaunch Food Safety Crackdown,” *AP-FoodTechnology.com*, February 10, 2010, available at <[www.ap-foodtechnology.com/Processing/China-forced-to-relaunch-food-safety-crackdown](http://www.ap-foodtechnology.com/Processing/China-forced-to-relaunch-food-safety-crackdown)>.

<sup>17</sup> In the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, many children were killed when their schools collapsed. While officials jailed the inspector responsible for checking the schools, they also jailed a newspaper editor who was investigating the collapses. See “Man Charged after Quake in China Gets 3 Years,” *The New York Times*, November 23, 2009.

<sup>18</sup> “Mass incidents are defined as protests involving over 100 people.” Susan Shirk, *China: The Fragile Superpower* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 57.

<sup>19</sup> China Administrative Management Society Study Group, 001.

<sup>20</sup> “China’s Urban Unemployment Rate Reached 4.3% in H-1,” *China Daily*, July 24, 2009, available at <[www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2009-07/24/content\\_8468884.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2009-07/24/content_8468884.htm)>.

<sup>21</sup> Tim Bowler, “China Warns of Unemployment Risk,” BBC, February 27, 2009, available at <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7915372.stm>>.

<sup>22</sup> For a discussion of China’s shift away from sustained economic reform, see Derek Scissors, “Deng Undone,” *Foreign Affairs* (May–June 2009).

<sup>23</sup> “Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao Predicts 8% Economic Growth,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 29, 2009, available at <<http://articles.latimes.com/2009/jan/29/business/fi-china-davos29>>.

<sup>24</sup> Diarmuid S. O’Brien, “Reducing Work Force in China,” *Squire Sanders China Update*, January 2009, 9–13, available at <[www.squiresanders.com/files/Publication/7ff85b68-ece1-4d0a-8ae7-2ae1c46948c3/Presentation/PublicationAttachment/755c31e9-1f6e-4be3-9a83-2b32241fc1f6/China\\_Update\\_January\\_2009.pdf](http://www.squiresanders.com/files/Publication/7ff85b68-ece1-4d0a-8ae7-2ae1c46948c3/Presentation/PublicationAttachment/755c31e9-1f6e-4be3-9a83-2b32241fc1f6/China_Update_January_2009.pdf)>, and Chi-Chu Tschang, “A Tough New Year for China’s Migrant Workers,” *Business Week*, February 4, 2009.

<sup>25</sup> Bruce Gilley, *Tiger on the Brink* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 169–170, 176–177.

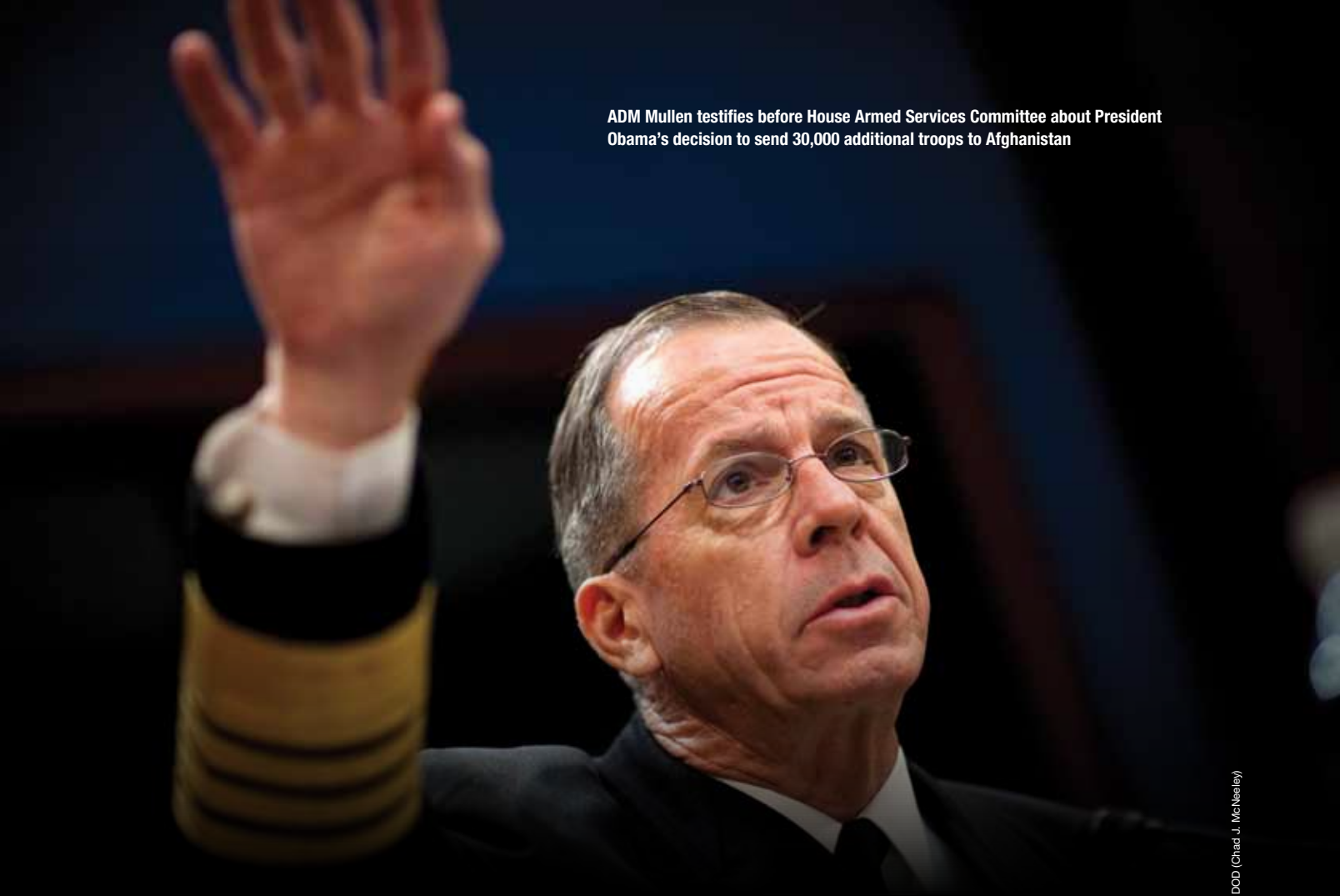
<sup>26</sup> Arthur Waldron, “Chinese Analyses of Soviet Failure: The Party,” *Jamestown Foundation China Brief*, November 19, 2009.

<sup>27</sup> China Administrative Management Society Study Group, 044–054.

<sup>28</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *World Factbook 2010*, “China,” available at <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>>.

<sup>29</sup> Edward Wong, “Uneasy Engagement—China and India Dispute Enclave on Edge of Tibet,” *The New York Times*, September 3, 2009.





ADM Mullen testifies before House Armed Services Committee about President Obama's decision to send 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan

DOD (Chad J. McNealey)

# Terrorists *and* Submarines

By JOHN T. KUEHN

## Lessons for Afghanistan from the Antisubmarine Campaign of World War I

**G**erman submarine warfare from 1915 to 1918 was the global terrorism of its day. Submarines attacked targets widely regarded as “innocent” and were extremely effective at it. In that respect, the U-boat campaign during World War I is strikingly similar to the terrorist insurgencies of today, especially those using suicide and improvised explosive device (IED) bombing tactics. Whether the bombs and guns are going off in Bali, Mumbai, Peshawar, Kabul, or Mosul, they are all attacking innocents for military purposes like the “illegal,” unrestricted U-boat “wolves” of a recent but forgotten age. Such tactics—whether suicide bombers or submarines—have invariably been those of weaker groups turning to a despised form of war in desperation. Even Mao Tse-tung, among the more articulate theorists of insurgent warfare, referred to guerrilla and irregular methods as weaker and advised proceeding to the “higher” forms of war for a final decision.<sup>1</sup>

## U-boats—The Terror Weapon

There is more to be learned from the analogy between U-boats and terrorist bombing than their commonality of method. For example, consider the sheer tension and frustration indicated by the Ambassador to the United States in historian John Terraine's account of the impact of German submarines on the British psyche in 1917:

*At the present rate of destruction more than four million tons will be sunk before the summer is gone. Such is this dire submarine danger. The English thought that they controlled the sea. . . . The submarine is the most formidable thing the war has produced—by far—and it gives the German the only earthly chance he has to win.<sup>2</sup>*

One can imagine any Israeli, American, Pakistani, Iraqi, or other government making a similar statement about terrorist methods: "It gives the terrorist/insurgent the only earthly chance he has to win."

Returning to 1917, these views were not limited to the British. The Russians, Italians, and French raised similar cries. President Woodrow Wilson became so alarmed about the German terror offensive against the sea lines of communication that he sent Herbert Hoover, a bright, number-crunching expert, to Europe to investigate the U-boat's real impact on his new allies. Was the damage simply British propaganda? Hoover reported that bread riots were imminent if the carnage continued, not so much in Great Britain as in Italy and France. The Germans had not only sunk record numbers of ships; they had sunk almost the entirety of the South American grain harvest bound for Europe.<sup>3</sup>

What happened that allowed the Allies to prevail? First, one must back up and understand that the Allies had adopted a ruinous strategy for combating the U-boat. This strategy was based on a long and comfortable naval tradition that esteemed the offensive, kinetic form of warfare that had characterized naval combat for millennia. The British, faced with the resumption of German U-boat warfare in February 1917, continued to employ the supposedly effective tactic of patrolling the sea lanes "hunting" for U-boats in the finest tradition of the Royal

Navy. After all, commerce warfare, or *guerre de course*, had never really succeeded against a major modern naval power. Never before had the commerce raiders been able to achieve a decisive result in a sustained campaign of privateering and raiding against sea lines of communications. Alfred Thayer Mahan's histories were full of examples to support this position, and if that wasn't enough, so were those of Sir Julian Corbett, the great British naval theorist, at least until the German submarines began to reap their horrible harvest.<sup>4</sup>

When the Germans resumed unrestricted submarine warfare against the Allies, an incredible crap shoot in hindsight, they had done something the British had not—they had looked at the lessons learned during the first go at unrestricted methods in 1915 and made crucial adjustments to become more effective should they decide to try it again. They prepared new, smaller UB-class boats that were prefabricated and easily assembled to operate out of a new base in Bruges, Belgium. This conferred the factor of strategic surprise for the Germans, since to that point U-boat sorties by the High Seas Fleet had been limited to their small coastline between the Netherlands and Denmark. Additionally, the Germans built reinforced concrete submarine pens in anticipation of an Allied naval counterattack on the source of the scourge. Finally, German improvements to their torpedoes came of age in 1917. Significantly, 1916 saw the greatest production of U-boats during the war.<sup>5</sup>

These measures, combined with the ferocity and surprise of their attack, came close to being the sort of "shock and awe" that modern-day, effects-based operations devotees dream of. Nonetheless, the British already knew they had a serious problem in late 1916 with the barely more restrained "restricted" U-boat campaign. These restrained methods, moreover, had already led to over 355,000 tons of lost Allied shipping in December 1916. What makes all of this more amazing is how ill prepared the British were for the all-out campaign in February 1917. An air of hopelessness was reflected in the words of Colonel Charles á Court Repington: "It was at present a question whether our armies could win the war before our navies lost it."<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, under Admiral Sir John Jellicoe's direction, the Royal Navy had instituted—at the last minute, one might say—a long-overdue organizational response to the problem with the establishment of the Admiralty Anti-Submarine Division under Admiral A.L. Duff.<sup>7</sup>

Setting up an antisubmarine warfare (ASW) syndicate is one thing; adopting the correct antisubmarine measures is entirely another. The challenge was unprecedented; as John Terraine wryly noted, "There was no manual" for ASW. So the Royal Navy essentially adopted the policy already in place for commerce raiding, the use of frigate-type vessels to counter the U-boat. Here is where

---

*the Germans had not only sunk record numbers of ships; they had sunk almost the entirety of the South American grain harvest bound for Europe*

---

hidebound tradition and perhaps the "Spirit of Nelson" may have proved most unfortunate. Although the Royal Navy had a useful warship type, the destroyer, ready at hand for this job, it had far too few of them. A general shortage of destroyers bedeviled all the major navies throughout the war. Destroyers were originally torpedo boat destroyers intended to screen the main bodies of fleets against torpedo attack, itself a rather new development in warfare. There were precious few of them left after their assignment to the main fleet duties and troop convoys. The British attempted to build more, but that only became a priority at the eleventh hour. Ironically, the Germans also helped provide the solution for this shortage when they caused the United States to enter the war.<sup>8</sup>

In the area of antisubmarine weapons, the British learned that gunfire scored few kills on the rare occasions when U-boats were caught on the surface. The Germans could dive faster than the British could man their guns, never mind bracket their targets, especially at night. In response, the British developed the first generation of depth charges, but like most new weapons systems they were ineffective at first. A means had to be devised to shoot them far enough from the ship so that the hunter would not be damaged or killed along with the prey. It was only in 1917 that a "pistol" was introduced along with variable depth settings for the Type-D depth charges. As with the destroyers, depth charge stocks were abysmally low when the Germans unleashed their terror campaign. However, none of that mattered if the wrong operational approach to the problem was taken—and it was. The British, in a phenomenal misunderstanding of the statistics

---

**Dr. John T. Kuehn is Associate Professor of Military History and Curriculum Developer in the Department of Military History at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.**

of this type of warfare, decided not to convoy ships, in part because they did not have enough escorts. Nonetheless, the mathematics dictating that more ships would get through in convoys escaped the minds of officers schooled in commerce raider hunting. One U-boat might meet one merchant ship and sink it. One U-boat meeting a convoy would at best sink one ship, and the others would all get away—guaranteed.<sup>9</sup>

The other key problem was how to locate the submarines other than going to the site of a burning merchant ship (“flaming datum” in ASW-speak), or more often the last presumed location. There were also hydrophones, but these were crude, only useful at extremely short ranges, and subject to interference by the ambient noise of anything with a screw in the water. Thus, the chances of successfully making contact with submarines in such open-ocean patrolling, even in areas of known danger, were ridiculously low. And so it was that the exactly wrong approach of hunting the U-boats was employed instead of using the small numbers of destroyers as escorts.<sup>10</sup>

The results were catastrophic. Not only did the Germans meet their tonnage goals, they exceeded them. As noted, they had already managed to sink the South American grain harvest for 1916–1917. The risk they took concerning American entry into the war seemed to pay off, especially when President Wilson balked at going to Congress for an outright declaration of war after the unrestricted submarine campaign began. It was only the notorious telegram by Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann in late February urging Mexico

to declare war on the United States, decoded and provided by a desperate British government, that prodded Washington into participation. Even then, as historian Barbara Tuchman notes, only the German Foreign Minister’s incredible admission of the telegram’s authenticity rallied American public opinion in favor of war prior to the President’s decision.<sup>11</sup>

As it turned out, Washington’s response was almost too late. The American declaration of war in April 1917 came during the worst months of the U-boat terror campaign. This

ing were immediate. Indeed, John Terraine argues that the “convoy acted like a spell” in turning the naval war in the Allies’ favor. The tonnage of ships went down slowly through the summer, and then plunged drastically in the fall. The Germans were forced to shift their patrol areas. By the end of the year, although much hard convoying remained, the Germans could see the writing on the wall.<sup>13</sup>

What happened? The Allied navies had regained the initiative and the ability to move what they needed to sustain the war effort by sea.

### *the American declaration of war in April 1917 came during the worst months of the U-boat terror campaign*

need not have happened. The antisubmarine division of the Admiralty had all the analytic data at its fingertips to indicate the wisdom of convoying. As early as February, Duff and his staff were arguing that the data suggested that the escorted convoy was the best means to counter the U-boat, given the low losses in that formation.<sup>12</sup> However, there were strong interests opposed to the convoy, and the strongest argument seemed to be that there simply were not enough escorts. All of these arguments proved to be flawed, but the issue of escorts was in part solved by the entry of the Americans and about 30 destroyers into the calculations for the needed escorts. Some have even argued that these ships provided the necessary margin for the tentative adoption of the convoy system as an experiment, almost a last gasp. Offensive patrols continued. But the results of convoy-

Their key vulnerability was also their key strength. The Germans had to come to the convoys in the open ocean to be successful. Even without escorts, the sheer math of the convoys resulted in lower loss rates. Once ships were escorted, the U-boats became the hunted and not the hunter. The addition of aircraft patrols further hindered the U-boats because finding where they were not was as important as finding where they were. Denied their prey, the U-boats had to attack the convoys—a no-win situation in 1917 and 1918 once the escorts, weapons, and tactics were in place.

### **Afghanistan as an Ocean**

How does the submarine experience relate to terrorism, or more specifically to the insurgent war in Afghanistan with the Afghan Taliban and their Islamic foreign

U.S. Naval Historical Center (Lamar R. Leahy)



**Crew of USS *Noma* during antisubmarine patrol, circa 1917**

U.S. Air Force (Laura K. Smith)



**Above: ISAF troops adopted population-centric counterinsurgency approach in Afghanistan**

U.S. Naval Heritage and History Command



**Right: USS *Benham* leaves Brest, France, to join escort convoy, October 1918**



fighter allies? In important ways, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) strategy in Afghanistan has mirrored the approach of the Royal Navy to the U-boat menace. Like the Royal Navy, NATO forces in Afghanistan have used tactics principally focused on hunting and killing the insurgents (mostly Taliban). Focusing on the population was not the “main effort,” as discussed in some recent heartrending memoirs such as Craig Mullaney’s *The Unforgiving Minute*.<sup>14</sup>

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan adopted a more mixed approach as the focus shifted from Iraq to Afghanistan in 2008, again like the Royal Navy in 1917. The doctrine around which these operations were built is found in Field Manual (FM) 3–24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3–33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, which was spearheaded by then–Lieutenant General David Petraeus while he was Commandant of the Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. This doctrine has sometimes been called “population-centric” counterinsurgency. It is potentially a resource-intensive approach that relies on a relatively large troop-to-population ratio for success—as many as 25 counterinsurgent troops per 1,000 residents. It also requires a substantial time commitment.<sup>15</sup> FM 3–24 methods were employed more and more, but in concert with kinetic methods under General David McKiernan—not due to tactical or operational preference so much as to expediency, given the limited numbers of troops. In fact, the kinetic side of this approach may have done more harm than good and been a factor in McKiernan’s eventual relief.<sup>16</sup>

The population of Afghanistan can in some measure be compared to the merchant ships in World War I, each needing escort. Thus, there is the constant demand for more troops in Afghanistan. Troops equate to escorts, and again there are not enough. How does one regain the initiative if he cannot completely “convoy” by concentrating the entire population in order to protect it? After all, the lower force ratios will in all likelihood continue. Even 40,000 more Americans is only a “drop in the ocean” that is Afghanistan. Is there no way around this conundrum? Certainly the British method during the Boer War, using concentration camps, is to be avoided. In any case, the British were not out to win over the population to a new indigenous political construct in the manner of NATO and the United States in Afghanistan.<sup>17</sup>

The example of the anti-U-boat campaign suggests a modified “convoy” approach. Something along these lines has already been suggested by a number of writers who know the area well.<sup>18</sup> What it boils down to is finding the closest analog to “convoys” that Afghanistan’s demographics and geography permit, prioritizing and then providing the security (escorts) that will force the enemy to react to NATO’s campaign design.<sup>19</sup> It is a modified

*a modified “convoy” approach  
boils down to finding the  
closest analog to “convoys” that  
Afghanistan’s demographics  
and geography permit*

population-centric approach that, like convoying, will require time and resources. NATO needs to match existing sustainable force levels to the most urbanized areas of the country and to logistic support. For example, such major cities as Kabul, Khost, Kandahar, and Herat might become “enclaves” (convoys) wherein priority one is security. The Taliban and their foreign fighter allies would have to come to NATO and the Afghan security forces.

This would entail retrenchment, and some might say abandonment, of large swaths of ground. But as a Pakistani major has recently argued, it offers some chance of long-term success in concert with other political measures. In fact, the major compares the problem in Afghanistan to “arrest[ing] the sea.”<sup>20</sup> The Taliban has a poor record of sustained popular satisfaction with their governance—although they *do* know how to govern locally, if repressively. The Afghans in general have a demonstrated record of infighting when there are no foreigners to coalesce against.<sup>21</sup> These attributes can be viewed as strengths that decrease the enemy’s initiative and undermine his base of support once the basis for unity is withdrawn.

The U-boat analogy only goes so far. People, tribes, and nations are not ships with set courses and destinations. Viewing the problem through the U-boat lens is only one means of better understanding the problem in Afghanistan; it will not by itself solve it. But in understanding the problem, we may better see a way ahead. **JFQ**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *Yu Chi Chan (Guerrilla Warfare)* in FMFRP 12–18, translated by S.B. Griffith (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), chapter 4. See also Field Manual 3–24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3–33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, hereafter FM 3–24 (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, 2006), 1–6.

<sup>2</sup> John Terraine, *The U-Boat Wars, 1916–1945* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1989), 61–62, 673.

<sup>3</sup> Hoover Library, Commerce Papers, William S. Sims, “Report to the Subcommittee on Naval Affairs of 13 March 1920,” Box 8 (00128), 115–118. Hoover’s testimony is inclusive in Sims’s report to Congress.

<sup>4</sup> Terraine, 19; Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Naval Strategy* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office reprint, 1991), 109, and Sir Julian Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press reprint, 1988), 176, 310–312.

<sup>5</sup> Terraine, 17–21.

<sup>6</sup> Cited in Terraine, 22–23.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 48–49.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 46. Terraine writes, “. . . it was the submarine war, above all, that gave April, 1917 the quality of terror.”

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 28–34.

<sup>11</sup> Barbara Tuchman, *The Zimmermann Telegram* (New York: Viking Books, 1958), 176–178.

<sup>12</sup> Paul W. Halpern, *A Naval History of World War I* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1995); see also Terraine, 53–54.

<sup>13</sup> Halpern, 355–368; Terraine, 57; and Dennis Conrad, “Were They Really So Unprepared? Josephus Daniels and the U.S. Navy’s Entry into World War I,” unpublished paper, September 11, 2009.

<sup>14</sup> Craig M. Mullaney, *The Unforgiving Minute: A Soldier’s Education* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2009), 362.

<sup>15</sup> FM 3–24, 1–13 and passim. For a population-centric critique as well as the issue of initiative, see Gian P. Gentile, “Gaining the Initiative in Afghanistan,” available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/authors/gian-gentile/>>.

<sup>16</sup> See Small Wars Journal Blog, especially <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2009/05/gen-mckiernan-replaced-in-afgh/>>.

<sup>17</sup> Thomas Packenham, *The Boer War* (New York: Random House, 1979), especially chapters 36–38.

<sup>18</sup> Mehar Omar Khan, “Don’t Try to Arrest the Sea: An Alternative Approach for Afghanistan,” available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2009/10/an-alternative-approach-for-af/>>.

<sup>19</sup> Gentile. See this article for the importance of an approach that shifts the initiative to NATO.

<sup>20</sup> Khan.

<sup>21</sup> Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), chapters 9 and 10.



**A Tactical Ethic: Moral Conduct in the Insurgent Battlespace**

By Dick Couch

Annapolis: Naval Institute Press,  
2010

140 pp. \$22.95

ISBN: 978-1-59114-137-2

Reviewed by

JAMES P. TERRY

There probably is no better writer in the country to address the important subject of ethical and moral conduct on the insurgent battlefield than Dick Couch, a Naval Academy graduate who served in Vietnam with the Navy SEALs and later taught ethics at the Academy after a career in the Central Intelligence Agency. While a platoon leader with SEAL Team One in Vietnam, he led one of the few successful prisoner of war rescues of that conflict. Couch addressed aspects of the topic of ethics in the military in three previous works: *Chosen Soldier: The Making of a Special Forces Warrior* (Three Rivers Press, 2008), *The Sheriff of Ramadi: Navy SEALs and the Winning of al-Anbar* (Naval Institute Press, 2008), and *The Warrior Elite: The Forging of SEAL Class 228* (Three Rivers Press, 2003). His current offering, *A Tactical Ethic*, is significant because it brings this discourse directly to the genre of conflict found on our battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan and to the actions of our Soldiers, Marines, and Special Operations Forces (SOF) responsive to the insurgent threat.

The message of this slim volume is simple: the two strands

of a unit's technical competence and its moral compass are equally critical, with the moral health reflected in the actions and words of our junior leaders possibly more important to combat effectiveness—especially in the insurgent environment, where the war is waged and won at the small unit level and the target is not the insurgent, but the trust and support of the local population.

Couch presents his thesis through a rational and highly readable discourse on the process of building and maintaining integrity and a culture of moral strength in the Army, Marine Corps, and SOF. While maintaining that the great majority of our forces are highly motivated and morally well grounded, he acknowledges that there have been instances of extremely bad behavior that undermine and subvert efforts to maintain discipline and support right conduct in critical operations in the insurgent environment. Couch identifies a phenomenon that we have all seen firsthand or been aware of: an aggressive and proficient natural leader hijacks or pirates a group within the unit to his own ends, subverting its effectiveness and corrupting its values. The framework of this discourse is to understand why this happens and to ensure that training and leadership within these units address the problem and redress its effects.

The training regimen within each of the Services is addressed and compared in terms of the focus of each in developing mental toughness and a moral centerline that will withstand the rigors of combat and battlefield pressures and uncertainty. Each training regime gets high marks. Weighted with these highly effective training packages are not only the cultural pressures and baggage reflected in the history, upbringing, and lingering old values of each individual Soldier, SEAL, or

Marine, but also the climate of the unit and the social pressures to conform and sometimes to accede to bad behavior. This can be especially critical, according to Couch, in the window between the completion of training and the eve of the first deployment.

As Couch points out, conduct is largely governed by the culture of the unit. That culture and its development begin in the training commands. The current practice of assigning our best to these commands is critical to initial development of correct values and a clear understanding of why good judgment and proper, disciplined actions are key to unit effectiveness in areas such as Afghanistan, where the goodwill of the local populace is imperative. Unfortunately, a few corrosive individuals within a squad or platoon can hijack a unit and sap its effectiveness. Strong leadership must be exercised not to tolerate these behaviors. Indeed, this direction need not come just from the designated leaders; it is equally effective and important coming from de facto leaders within a small unit with the moral courage to step forward—often extremely difficult to do in close-knit units where loyalty trumps all. In these circumstances, the actions of unit and de facto leaders must reflect the values-based conduct that is a key element and an essential part of the warrior ethos and its training. When Marines or Soldiers understand that their responses to everyday circumstances are as important as their conduct on the battlefield, their leadership has matured, and it becomes more difficult for pirates to gain traction within these units.

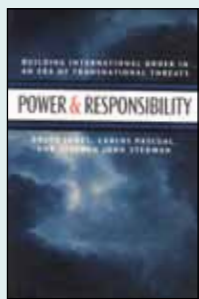
The rules of ethics (ROE) that Couch addresses at the conclusion of this text are common-sense guidelines. In explaining the truism that ground combat unit members cannot perform up to expectations if those expecta-

tions are not clearly defined, he urges all unit leaders to reflect on the fact that a clear understanding by unit members of moral expectations is as critically important as tactical training. Similarly, he notes that today's warriors closely watch their leaders and that leadership by example cannot be oversold. He states persuasively that good leaders must have a sounding board and that growth in cohesion of a unit is closely tied to effective communication among its members. Likewise, he points out that alcohol usage is different for different troops, but that a leader must know his men and understand the line between recreation and addiction. Most important, the abstinence rule on deployment, and always in the battlespace, must be clear and enforced. The boredom rule demands that unit members be constantly engaged so that they are neither uninformed nor misled on unmet expectations, whether as to the possibility of nonengagement or lack of tactical challenges. Similarly, the recognition and intolerance rules are flip sides of each other. Effective and positive role models must be recognized just as definitively as those exhibiting negative values must be neutralized. In the same vein, leaders must be clear that wrong action on the battlefield is a form of disloyalty. Finally, all small unit leaders must be taught and encouraged to exhibit the courage of their convictions and to follow through on those convictions, however difficult. This is the most difficult of the ROEs, but the most important.

*A Tactical Ethic* is not a preachy book, but rather a comprehensive and personal review of what each of us knows and needs to be reminded of from time to time. When I had a platoon in Vietnam with the Third Marines in 1968–1969, I had each of the personality types addressed in this text. I admit I enjoyed

reflecting on my own experiences as I read these pages. This is an immensely important text for those responsible for operational planning and execution in today's military. It is even more compelling for our small unit leaders and noncommissioned officers. **JFQ**

**James P. Terry is Chairman of the Board of Veterans Appeals. He is a retired Marine colonel and holds a doctorate from The George Washington University.**



**Power & Responsibility:  
Building International Order in  
an Era of Transnational Threats**

*By Bruce Jones, Carlos Pascual,  
and Stephen John Stedman*  
Washington, DC: Brookings  
Institution Press, 2009  
360 pp. \$32.95  
ISBN: 978-0-8157-4706-2

*Reviewed by*  
JOHN W. SUTHERLIN

**T**his book is the second of two products from the Managing Global Insecurity (MGI) project, the ambitious purpose of which was to determine how to best organize the globalized world to manage pressing issues that no single nation has the power, credibility, or will to tackle unilaterally. The collective experiences of the authors (all international consultants) at the United Nations (UN) coupled with years in dialogue with diplomats, academics, and policymakers from every major nation provided a perspective that is both distinctive and accessible. In many ways, Jones, Pascual, and

Stedman amalgamate well-known multilateralist and neo-idealist works (for example, those of Robert Axelrod, Robert Keohane, and Hedley Bull) with their collective practices. But this book is not a highly theoretical one. It is probably not going to find its way into any undergraduate courses on American foreign policy. Rather, it is a convenient guide for foreign policymakers. But those looking for a justification for abandoning American-led institutional reform will not find it here. The authors are clear about the type of world they see: one in which "American leadership has been shallow and sometimes misguided, but is greatly needed" (p. 3).

An important assumption permeates this book: the line between national and global security has all but been erased. Consider that "most Americans would agree on most of the threats to their national security: transnational terrorism, proliferation of nuclear weapons, a pandemic of a new deadly disease, global warming, and economic instability and crisis" (p. 4). Could these threats be managed through unilateral action alone? The United States and its allies may have developed the global system after World War II, but much has changed since 1945. National interests alone have not ensured global security.

The authors offer the concept of "responsible sovereignty" as the centerpiece of their blueprint for ensuring global security, arguing that "all states [have] to be accountable for their actions that have impacts beyond their borders, and make such reciprocity a core principle in restoring international order and for providing the welfare of one's own citizens" (p. 9). In short, they declare, "International order in an age of transnational threats requires power in the service of responsibility" (p. 15). Related to responsible sovereignty would be the creation of a Group of 16 (G-16), representing

"the smallest (and therefore most efficient) number of states that includes all major powers and rising and key regional states" (p. 16).

The book is neatly divided into three sections: "Power," "Responsibility," and "Order." In part one, "Power," the authors articulate what they call an "effective international architecture" by employing "nine lessons of institutional innovation" (pp. 47-51), which can be summarized as the requirement to build a system with U.S. and other G-16 support on a platform through improving the credibility of the process and the institutional support of the globalized system. The authors use their constructs to answer their own questions. How will this be done? The G-16 will be formed and based on the concept of responsible sovereignty. Why should the United States take the lead? In their view, the United States is too weak or lacks the credibility to act unilaterally but is essential to a multilateral policy approach. Such a dichotomy may indeed be false because world affairs are often more complex than either/or scenarios. By the close of the first part, the authors have made their case that something has to be done if global security will be managed.

The second part is titled "Responsibility," but it reads like a litany of failings that the present system has produced. Climate change is discussed in a matter-of-fact manner that exacerbates an often teleological approach to the entire subject. If, as the authors state, "close to 90 percent of all carbon emissions" will come from rising powers, then it begs the question: what good is the G-16 in setting and enforcing policy? If the authors stopped there, they would have stumbled badly. But they link climate change to nuclear policy and expand the surface area of diplomacy to approach a multilateral and possible successful regime (a word

they do not actually use, but one that applies). This is significant because it could allow many states to forge an agreement across multiple issues instead of only pursuing bilateral agreements.

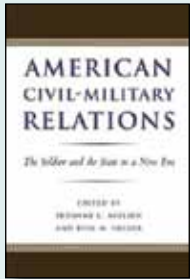
Perhaps the most relevant chapters are the ones on terrorism and economic security because of where the United States and its allies rank such issues among all others today. The authors' mindset is apparent from statements such as: "If the United States took a lead role in reshaping the institutional counterterrorism architecture, it would go a long way toward reassuring other countries that its commitment to rebuilding international order is real" (p. 232). On the other hand, it could fuel the fires of terrorism by justifying a fear of American hegemony.

In the third section, "Order," the Middle East is the focus. The authors show insight as they lament the failings of most efforts to establish order by the United States and the UN. But they appear to ignore one of the most pressing undercurrents for the region: how can you rely upon responsible sovereignty when many regional players lack sovereignty in the first place or when Israel's sovereignty is being threatened? One suggestion was to bring together the UN and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (p. 287) for security and force all parties to become more "responsible."

In all fairness to the authors, it is easy to point out mistakes or misjudgments for a book with such a sweeping agenda as reformulating the global security system. Even as the book ends, the authors make note of their "substantive and political difficulties" (p. 314) in formulating a central thesis that would be acceptable to all states. Yet they may have assembled the best argument for moving into a new direction: America's (and hence the world's) security demands that a new trail be blazed. **JFQ**



John W. Sutherlin, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor of Political Science and Codirector of the Social Science Research Laboratory at the University of Louisiana at Monroe.



**American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a New Era**

Edited by Suzanne C. Nielsen  
and Don M. Snider  
Baltimore: Johns Hopkins  
University Press, 2009  
409 pp. \$34.95  
ISBN: 978-0-8018-9288-2

Reviewed by  
ROBERT DANIEL WALLACE

Samuel Huntington's *The Soldier and the State* identified the critical importance of civil-military relations at the early stages of the Cold War while discussing how to balance national security requirements within the context of democratic society. He identified influencers that shape the military's role in society and that require the military to remain capable of defending the Nation while staying subordinate to civilian authorities and to conform to societal norms and ideologies. Huntington also identified two means of civilian control over the military: *subjective control*, which includes an integration of the military into civilian political spheres, and *objective control*, characterized by an apolitical and separate professional military. Over 50 years after *The Soldier and the State* was published, West Point professors Suzanne Nielsen and

Don Snider have compiled a number of essays that discuss both the relevance and shortfalls of Huntington's concepts.

This book was the result of a research project focused on creating an updated resource for civil-military relations classes at West Point and includes chapters from a number of well-known scholars. The text lends support to Huntington's contention that the relations between the armed forces and society must be examined objectively through both theoretical and pragmatic frameworks. In the first chapter, Nielsen and Snider contend that Huntington's concepts provide the basis for an examination of the relationship between America's military and political institutions that "follows the trail that Huntington blazed" (p. 2).

The first section examines Huntington's theories from a historical perspective and how his views helped shaped civil-military relations discourse over the past 50 years. Included are a chapter by Richard Betts on the state of American civil-military relations since 9/11, Matthew Moten's in-depth analysis of the Donald Rumsfeld-Eric Shinseki conflicts in 2002, and Peter Feaver and Erika Seeler's assessment of civil-military relations literature both before and after *The Soldier and the State*.

The next portion discusses Huntington's concepts of the societal and functional characteristics (imperatives) that shape the military as an institution. Michael Desch discusses Huntington's contention that the overall ideological views of the military (conservative) and those of American society (liberal) are often incompatible, while Williamson Murray discusses the need for military officer education reform. In the third part of the book, the civil-military partnership is examined from the perspective of the military's

participation and responsibilities. James Burk discusses the requirements of officers to obey civilian orders and the concept of "blind versus responsible obedience" (p. 154), while David Segal and Karin De Angelis examine the definition of the military as a profession and how it has evolved since Huntington wrote *The Soldier and the State*.

The final section includes a discussion by Risa Brooks on the hazards of military participation in politics, and Richard Kohn examines the importance of personalities and relationships in civil-military relations. The editors conclude the text with a number of overarching observations from their research and the contributing authors and clearly articulate that while there may be disagreements on the theoretical details in *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington's work remains relevant and a viable framework to consider modern American civil-military relationships.

The strengths of this book include a frank discussion of the difficulties inherent in civil-military relations. While the overall text argues that Huntington's theories and observations remain relevant, the chapters contain candid and well-supported arguments that incorporate other contending theorists, to include Morris Janowitz and Eliot Cohen, and do not hesitate to criticize the concepts presented in *The Soldier and the State*. Moten's detailed discussion of Rumsfeld's dismal relations with military leaders provides an excellent narrative of the civil-military difficulties during America's current overseas conflicts. Another excellent, albeit controversial, discussion is Brooks's logical analysis of the benefits and risks of military participation in civilian political affairs and the conclusion in favor of limiting political activities by active and retired military

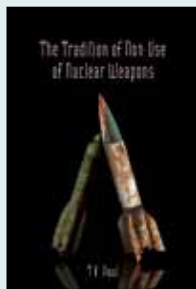
personnel. Finally, Richard Kohn contributes the most important chapter, which provides detailed guidance on how senior military and civilian leaders should participate in efforts to ensure America's national security. Kohn notes that the military is the institution with the most continuity (elected leaders will come and go) and thus the most responsibility to maintain positive relations.

At the same time, this book does suffer from a few flaws. Many of the chapters rehash the same background information on Huntington as the introduction, and the book gives the impression of a collection of distinct journal articles rather than a coherent discussion of civil-military issues. The most significant problem is Williamson Murray's critique of officer education, which is both dated and anecdotal; he describes, for example, the Joint Forces Staff College as having a "high school curriculum" without providing citation or evidence (p. 346). Murray's analysis fails to recognize that the post-9/11 American military has made significant strides in improving both its education system and combat doctrine in response to the current security environment.

Yet these issues are minor and do not diminish the overall value of this book to a wide audience of scholars, military and civilian leaders, and even the general public. While Huntington's text began as an effort to provide a resource for teaching civil-military relations at the university level, it resulted in a useful examination of the enduring relationship between the American political and defense institutions. For decades, his theories have been central to scholarly discussions of civil-military issues; this book clearly demonstrates that the concepts presented in *The Soldier and the*

State are still relevant for modern civil-military relations. **JFQ**

**Lieutenant Colonel Robert Daniel Wallace, USA, is a faculty member at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and a Ph.D. student in Kansas State University's Security Studies Program.**



**The Tradition of Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons**

By T.V. Paul

Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009

319 pp. \$29.95

ISBN: 978-0-8047-6132-1

Reviewed by JASON WOOD

**W**hy have nuclear weapons not been used since their debut over Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945? For some time, this question has occupied the high-minded musings of deterrence theorists and strategists alike. In truth, the question of non-use has so occupied the academy that those who think about its antithesis—use—have come to prominence if for no other reason than their willingness to “think the unthinkable”—an adventure upon which Herman Kahn established his legacy.

In the ongoing effort to explain nuclear non-use, two competing schools of thought have emerged: rational/materialist and normative/ideational. The former rejects the idea of a strict non-use ethic, while the latter espouses a stringent taboo-like prohibition against the use of nuclear weapons based on

social constructs that go beyond rational considerations. TV. Paul's *The Tradition of Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons* articulates a highly nuanced and eclectic middle ground between these opposing paradigms. A professor of international relations at Canada's McGill University, Paul argues that non-use can be explained by the emergence of an informal social norm, or tradition, that recognizes both the rational/material arguments against nuclear use and ideational factors such as culture and international norms.

In proposing a tradition-based framework, Paul's book stands out among several recent contributions to the academic literature on the topic. In *The Nuclear Taboo* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), Nina Tannenwald's argument falls squarely in the constructivist paradigm. While not entirely dismissive of material factors, “she provides very little, if any, discussion of what material factors contribute to the creation and persistence of the taboo-like prohibition,” as Paul points out. In contrast to Tannenwald, Paul attempts to firmly delineate linkages between material and ideational factors, rather than offer a cursory acknowledgment of the interplay between the two. Other current contributions serve as valuable complements to Paul's argument. Maria Rost Rubble's *Nonproliferation Norms: Why States Choose Nuclear Restraint* (University of Georgia Press, 2009) addresses the question of why states with the motive, means, and opportunity to produce nuclear weapons choose not to—a sort of non-acquisition tradition. On the other end of the spectrum, Mark Fitzpatrick's recent *Institut Français des Relations Internationales* Proliferation Paper *The World After: Proliferation, Deterrence, and Disarmament if the Nuclear Taboo is Broken* considers the impact of violating that prohibition.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the book is Paul's thorough parsing of the word *tradition* in contrast to other non-use terminology such as *taboo*. Such attention to semantics and clear delineation of the precise implications of a particular term is uncommon but nonetheless important. The greater debate over nuclear policy has suffered immensely from such a lack of specificity. For example, scare-tacticians frequently refer to the U.S. arsenal as being on “hair-trigger” alert. Though intended to conjure up images of Strangelovian madmen with a blinking red button under their finger, the operational reality is in fact much different. Regrettably, Paul's specificity is applied incompletely. Though the implications of *tradition* are clearly understood and delineated, one could argue that it may be equally important to parse the term *use*. Indeed, many rationalist strategists, in rejecting the idea of a non-use taboo, would assert that U.S. nuclear weapons are used every day for deterrence and assurance.

As Paul writes in chapter 9, “There is also the question about how deeply ingrained the tradition is among new nuclear states as well as the aspiring ones.” A weakness of the book is that Paul dedicates only one short chapter to Israel, India, and Pakistan and devotes comparatively little analysis to the question of Iran or North Korea. Taboo or tradition aside, few would argue with the fact that Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) nuclear weapons states have stridently abstained from using nuclear weapons and that current non-NPT nuclear weapons states have shown respect for non-use to date. The burning question is whether rogue states with ideological zealots at the helm would share a similar appreciation for the non-use framework that Paul describes. The relatively minimal analysis dedicated to rogue states stands in

sharp contrast to Paul's voluminous criticism of U.S. policy in the years immediately following 9/11.

Several recent events stand to shape and reflect perceptions on the non-use tradition in the post-George W. Bush era, providing a ready audience for *The Tradition of Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons*. Recent policy guidance from the Strategic Posture Commission directly addresses the issue of strategic ambiguity regarding U.S. nuclear use. Additionally, the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review alongside the negotiation of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty follow-on has reinvigorated debate over force structure and the role of nuclear weapons in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Of particular significance, the 2010 NPT Review Conference provided a multilateral forum for states to debate the issue of binding negative security assurances versus informal non-use declarations. Policymakers and analysts following these consequential proceedings will find Paul's book of interest.

In light of the significant events ahead, Paul's framework is a timely and important contribution to the nuclear debate that incorporates valuable perspectives from both the rationalist and ideational perspectives. As the issues of arms control, force structure, and disarmament inevitably become mired in political trench warfare, creative and eclectic thinking on nuclear issues will be at a premium. *The Tradition of Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons* stands to provide an example of the rigorous scrutiny to which classic paradigms must be subjected in the search for real-world policy solutions. **JFQ**

**Jason Wood is a Policy Analyst with Science Applications International Corporation and a Scholar in the 2010 Nuclear Scholars Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.**

# The Social Sciences and Innovation in Gaming

By MARGARET M. MCCOWN

**T**his is a fascinating time to be a gamer, particularly one developing policy games. The types of problems to be gamed, the technical support available to do so, and the importance of exercises' findings all seem imbued with unusual potential and urgency. The security challenges that we capture and present in strategic games are increasingly characterized by transnational, networked, and multilevel domestic, national, and international factors, all of which require new or, at least, *sharpened* tools to represent and assess. At the same time, a range of new tools, from distributed computer gaming systems to virtual reality, has become available. This article argues, however, that for practitioners writing virtually any game, the social sciences—economics, political science, and sociology—constitute the single most important source of both substantive theory and methodological insight.

The simple explanation behind this assertion is that almost all strategic level policy problems are also social science problems; they concern how actors, whether individuals, groups, bureaucracies, social movements, or nations, make calculated decisions with respect to their interests and environment, construct social institutions and rules to further those goals, and compete for goods allocated in ways influenced by all of the above. This article briefly highlights some ways in which social scientists have theorized and tested hypotheses about how and why actors make and break rules, and the relevance of these efforts to gaming.

## Game Theory Is Not a Theory of Gaming

Game theory is, of course, the social science tool mostly widely associated with gaming. Game theory is not a theory of wargaming, policy gaming, or strategic gaming, but rather a tool of applied mathematics used widely across the social sciences.

If one is writing and executing tabletop exercises, one is, in fact, doing almost the opposite of game theory—but it is useful to review the discipline nonetheless, for its approach yields concepts useful to gamers in both their parsimony and generalizability.

Game theorists create mathematical models of interdependent decisionmaking. These models represent how rational players make calculated decisions, anticipating other players' reactions on the basis of their preferences that yield certain outcomes. In other words, a game is some set of rules, giving a group of players choices that result in different payoffs. The “game” is for players to determine the choice that gets them the biggest payoff, taking into account the ways that they anticipate other players responding to them.<sup>1</sup> Taken together, these concepts—rational actors, rules presenting players with some set of choices, and outcomes with some payoffs—define the game.

In tabletop exercises, designers do not express these factors in diagrams or equations but rather in detailed scenarios rich in contextual detail. Even though the “rules” may be no more elaborate than a description of the state of the world within the game and the instruction that players should describe their best response to it, these key elements are embedded within every good scenario: some set of rules that shape the players' options—options that will have different potential payoffs and can be assumed to elicit some reaction from other players. Games may hold some factors constant (such as a game with only a blue team, in which the reactions of “opponents” are not explicitly projected) or just describe them cursorily (a scene-setting scenario that tells participants which sandbox they are playing in and the context that shapes their decisions but that may not restrict their decision options beyond that). But it is useful for gamers to keep in mind that an effective exercise will have all of these components explicitly or implicitly and, just as important,

the postexercise analysis should address them and explain why they were instantiated as they were.

Game theory, then, gives analysts a means of thinking systematically about complex, multistage, interdependent decisionmaking and the factors that go into it. The different constituent parts of games—rationality and individual decisionmaking, the rules of the game, and the incentives they create—have stimulated further empirical social science research of relevance to exercise designers.

## *Homo Economicus*

Game theory assumes players are rational, which is to say they will be able to identify and select the outcome most beneficial to them from the options and tradeoffs available to them. Since we know that most individuals do not pause with every choice they make in a day to contemplate all possible decisions, calculate the relative benefit they might get from

---

*game theory gives analysts  
a means of thinking  
systematically about complex,  
multistage, interdependent  
decisionmaking and the  
factors that go into it*

---

each, and then order these choices in terms of benefits, this assumption has prompted a great deal of research on how individuals and groups do actually make decisions if they do not act like game theorists' *homo economicus*. In fact, the assumption works pretty well at predicting behavior, on aggregate.

But experimental research shows there are some interesting ways in which people

---

Dr. Margaret M. McCown is an Associate Research Fellow in the Center for Applied Strategic Learning at the National Defense University.



consistently deviate from the assumption in what is often called “boundedly rational behavior.” Several well-known examples have to do with how people make calculations with respect to risk. For instance, people tend to make risk-averse choices if the expected outcome of their decision is positive, but make risk-seeking choices to avoid negative outcomes. And their decisions can be changed simply by reframing the descriptions of the outcomes without changing the actual benefit they get from them. This is called the “pseudo-certainty effect.” People also frequently fall prey to the “sunk costs fallacy”—continuing an endeavor once an irretrievable investment has been made, despite knowing that it does not change the probability of an ideal outcome. The literature examining the ways in which people do and do not deviate from perfect rationality is interesting and relevant for a whole range of policy games, such as those that investigate the dynamics of bargaining processes or the impact of perceived risk on decisionmaking in crisis simulations.

### Institutions

A second social science literature of great relevance to gamers is that on institutionalism. Institutions are understood by social scientists as formal and informal norms, from social conventions to contracts to laws and constitutions that shape (and are created by) human interaction. In the game of politics, for instance, the constitution sets the rules of the game, defining who can play, when, and how. The structure of rules guides outcomes in pervasive ways. For example, an electoral system relying on proportionate representation, assigning seats in a legislature proportionate to the number of votes won nationwide, will tend to create the more direct link between voters and parties—as well as a large number of parties and greater likelihood of coalition governments.

Institutions create incentives for behavior, and depending on how complex they are, anticipating the way outcomes are shaped by these incentives may be difficult. The Israeli electoral changes of 2002 are a now famous example of the potential for unintended consequences to institutional change. There was gathering concern in Israel throughout the 1980s and 1990s about coalition politics and a perception that small parties, and particularly religious parties, had gained disproportionate influence, weakening the discretion of the prime minister in forming

coalition governments. The constitution was changed, requiring, among other things, that the prime minister be directly elected rather than the leader of the largest party to successfully form a coalition. Although the goal of these reforms was to strengthen the power of the prime minister in forming a coalition, in the first election after the law was changed, the power of the two largest parties was weakened. Direct election of the prime minister had the effect of electing heads of government who were separate from the largest parties in

---

*the impacts of changes  
in the norms that govern  
international relations or the  
structure of international  
organizations are issues that  
seminar games are ideal for  
investigating*

---

parliament, severing the link between party size and executive influence. It gave small parties more leverage to bargain with large parties and extract concessions in exchange for support, and it created a disincentive for constituents to vote strategically, casting a vote for a larger party they might prefer less but that they anticipate having greater power.

Institutions shape the incentives, payoffs, and winning strategies of all players in all games. The social sciences have extensively explored the consequences of different institutional arrangements, their impact on power distributions, the processes that undergird changes in them, and their micro-foundational roots in human decisionmaking. This work presents a rich set of hypotheses and empirical findings that could easily be explored in games examining issues as varied as the effect of different Iraqi constitutional arrangements to the efficacy of different stability and reconstruction measures in far less developed countries. The impacts of changes in the norms, formal and informal, that govern international relations or the structure of international organizations are also issues that seminar games are ideal for investigating.

### Incentives Matter

One of the basic and most fundamental takeaways of the social science literature is that incentives matter and that they are shaped by the institutional rules of the game. These rules matter so much that they can

easily induce players, anticipating retaliation from others, to make rational choices that are suboptimal relative to those that could be achieved through cooperation. An entire thread of game theory is devoted to using models to suggest these counterintuitive findings. Tabletop exercises are not as parsimonious as mathematical models and not as specific about the rules and payoffs that shape outcomes, but this can be an advantage. A seminar game could constitute an excellent opportunity to weigh the incentive problems inhibiting, for example, cooperation in matters such as governance of the global commons. If one of the things that qualitatively specified games do well is collate expert knowledge, then they could be particularly effective at eliciting discussion about the ways in which certain institutions described in the scenario may create perverse incentives, giving policymakers a head start on identifying unintended consequences of decisions.

The social sciences and associated analytical tools, even game theory, do not provide theories of gaming per se. However, because much discourse and research revolves around questions and structures that have direct parallels and applicability to gaming, their insights have great relevance to exercise designers. Many social scientists have long been accustomed to thinking more rigorously about how the factors that are also the constituent parts of games work as well as the implications of different specifications of them. Moreover, problems attacked by both social scientists and gamers are essentially the same. For all of these reasons, extant work in economics, political science, and sociology should be the first point of departure for gaming practitioners looking for theory, methods, and ideas. **JFQ**

### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> Although securities studies professionals often think of “strategic” as referring to the level of analysis above the tactical and operational level, in the context of a game theoretic model (and of the social sciences generally), it simply means the decision a player makes, taking into account what he anticipates opposing players doing in response to his choices.

# Joint Doctrine Update

## Joint Chiefs of Staff J7 Joint Education and Doctrine Division

**J**oint Publication (JP) 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, states, “Joint warfare is team warfare.” The lubrication between the various parts of the joint team is common understanding, which is built on the broad shoulders of joint doctrinal thought expressed in standardized terms that are widely known and used.

Crisp and clear definitions of ideas, capabilities, and authorities are at the heart of joint doctrine. Descriptive language—different from defining language—amplifies understanding by providing context and color. The former tells us what a thing *is*; the latter only tells us about *aspects* of the thing. The mantra “precise terms used precisely” is therefore a doctrinal catechism and should be a core competency of all members of the U.S. profession of arms.

In service of common understanding is the Joint Terminology program administered by the Joint Staff J7. JP 1–02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, sets forth standard U.S. military terminology that is approved for general use by all components of the agency.

JP 1–02 serves as the primary repository of approved terms and definitions and should be consulted when preparing correspondence, to include policy, strategy, doctrine, and planning documents. JP 1–02 does not replace a standard English language dictionary, but rather serves as a supplement containing terms that have distinct military meanings not adequately covered in a common dictionary.

It is important to note up front that JP 1–02 is not the source of terms. It is the box where the approved terms are held for easy reference. Terms in JP 1–02 come only from four sources: joint doctrine, specific notation in Office of the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) policy issuances, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)–agreed terminology, or by direct order of the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense or the CJCS.

But not all military terms are appropriate for JP 1–02. Service-specific, functional-

ity specific, or highly technical terms are considered specialist terminology and should reside in glossaries written for a specific audience. Frequently, definitions are provided for a limited use (that is, for a single document); future concepts under development may also generate new terms and definitions (or new definitions for extant terms). None of these are considered JP 1–02 definitions by default.

Of the four approved sources, joint doctrine is the most preferred method for establishing terminology as its narrative format provides room for amplifying descriptive text. Next in preference are policy issuances, specifically DOD directives, DOD instructions, CJCS instructions, and DOD directive-type memorandums; these statements lack the space to provide full contextual meaning. Next, NATO-agreed terminology may be entered in JP 1–02 to delineate its usage in an Alliance context, particularly when a NATO definition may be different from a U.S. definition. Finally, and least preferred, directed terms are incorporated in JP 1–02 when the meaning of a term requires an authoritative decision for resolution between competing perspectives. (Recent examples of the latter are the current definitions of *cyberspace* and *cyberspace operations*.)

The J7 administered process for including terms in JP 1–02 involves DOD-wide<sup>1</sup> staffing. During the staffing process, any component may comment on a proposal recommending approval, disapproval, or modification. The CJCS, through the J7, is responsible for resolving any contentious issues that arise during coordination.

Terminology standardization, while a structured and orderly process, is a field that is responsive to the needs of the joint force. Most notably, there is an ongoing effort to annotate each entry in JP 1–02 with a source publication. Source documents are helpful because they identify the authoritative context for each term. Additionally, source documents enable terms to be reviewed and updated regularly as part of the normal revision cycles of their source publications.

The initial effort for identifying source documents started in 2008 when the J7 identi-

fied 1,354 of approximately 6,000 terms in JP 1–02 that were not used in joint doctrine publications and could not be attributed to a source document. The staffing of these terms to the Services, combatant commands, and Office of the Secretary of Defense yielded 900 obsolete entries that the Director of the Joint Staff approved for deletion in March 2010. This sourcing effort is ongoing and seeks to ensure that JP 1–02 remains the relevant, up-to-date source for DOD terminology and a foundation for common understanding and cooperation within the joint force.

Questions about the Joint Terminology program can be directed to JEDDSupport@js.pentagon.mil.

### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> DOD components that review terminology proposals are the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the CJCS and the Joint Staff, the Office of the Inspector General of the DOD, the combatant commands, the DOD agencies, field activities, and all other organizational entities in the DOD.

### Proper Citation

When citing a term found in JP 1–02, one should refer to the source document and not JP 1–02; it is *not* proper to state, “In accordance with JP 1–02, the definition of *Irregular Warfare* is. . . .” Proper citation is “Per JP 1–02, the definition of *Irregular Warfare* is. . . .”

### JPs Revised or Under Review

- JP 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*
- JP 1–0, *Personnel Support to Joint Operations*
- JP 1–04, *Legal Support to Military Operations*
- JP 2–01, *Joint and National Intelligence Support to Military Operations*
- JP 2–01.2, *Counterintelligence and Human Intelligence Support to Joint Operations*
- JP 2–03, *Geospatial Intelligence Support to Joint Operations*
- JP 3–0, *Joint Operations*
- JP 3–01, *Countering Air and Missile Threats*

JP 3-02.1, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Landing Force Operations*

JP 3-03, *Joint Interdiction*

JP 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*

JP 3-05.1, *Joint Special Operations Task Force Operations*

JP 3-07, *Stability Operations*

JP 3-07.2, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Antiterrorism*

JP 3-08, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination during Joint Operations*

JP 3-09, *Joint Fire Support*

JP 3-10, *Joint Security Operations in Theater*

JP 3-13, *Information Operations*

JP 3-13.1, *Electronic Warfare*

JP 3-13.3, *Operations Security*

JP 3-13.4, *Military Deception*

JP 3-15.1, *Counter-Improvised Explosive Device Operations*

JP 3-16, *Multinational Operations*

JP 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense*

JP 3-30, *Command and Control for Joint Air Operations*

JP 3-31, *Command and Control for Joint Land Operations*

JP 3-32, *Command and Control for Joint Maritime Operations*

JP 3-33, *Joint Task Force Headquarters*

JP 3-34, *Joint Engineer Operations*

JP 3-50, *Personnel Recovery*

JP 3-52, *Joint Doctrine for Airspace Control in the Combat Zone*

JP 3-61, *Public Affairs*

JP 3-68, *Noncombatant Evacuation Operations*

JP 4-01, *Joint Doctrine for the Defense Transportation System*

JP 4-01.2, *Sealift Support to Joint Operations*

JP 4-01.5, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Transportation Terminal Operations*

JP 4-01.6, *Joint Logistics Over-the-Shores (JLOTS)*

JP 4-02, *Health Service Support*

JP 4-03, *Joint Bulk Petroleum and Water Doctrine*

JP 4-05, *Joint Mobilization Planning*

JP 4-06, *Mortuary Affairs in Joint Operations*

JP 4-09, *Joint Doctrine for Global Distribution*

JP 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*

JP 6-0, *Doctrine for C<sup>3</sup> Systems Support in Joint Operations*

JP 6-01, *Joint Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations (JEMSO)*

# Time for the Deconstruction of Field Manual 3-24

By GIAN P. GENTILE

**T**he principles of population-centric counterinsurgency (COIN) have become transcendent in the U.S. Army and other parts of the greater Defense Establishment. Concepts such as population security, nationbuilding, and living among the people to win their hearts and minds were first injected into the Army with the publication of the vaunted Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, in December 2006. Unfortunately, the Army was so busy fighting two wars that the new doctrine was written and implemented and came to dominate how the Army thinks about war without a serious professional and public debate over its efficacy, practicality, and utility.

The fundamental assumption behind population-centric counterinsurgency and the Army's "new way of war" is that it has worked in history, was proven to work in Iraq during the surge, and will work in the future in places such as Afghanistan as long as its rules are followed, the experts are listened to, and better generals are put in charge.

Combat commanders currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan are judged as successes or failures by COIN precepts. A recent article in the *Army Times* by veteran reporter Sean Naylor accused a battalion and brigade commander of a Stryker Brigade in Afghanistan in 2009 of not following FM 3-24's rules and implied that, because of this, it failed at its mission and had many Soldiers killed as a result. An Army report on the Wanat engagement, where nine American Soldiers were killed in Afghanistan in July 2008, also put the battalion and company commanders in the docket and judged them to be failures at population-centric counterinsurgency. That unofficial report (leaked to the press) helped lead to a more formal Army investigation.

In a recent book review in *Army Magazine*, retired Army officer and

counterinsurgency expert John Nagl "indicted" the Army for not following proper COIN rules in Iraq from 2003 to 2007. Should they be *indicted*, as Nagl charged, for failing at population-centric counterinsurgency? This has gone too far. In fact, it is all reminiscent of the preposterous claims made by Vietnam-era Army officer David Hackworth that the commanding general in Vietnam from 1964 to 1968, William C. Westmoreland, should be held "criminally" liable for U.S. failure there. Westmoreland was not the single point of failure for the United States in Vietnam—in fact, far from it. That most tragic war was lost because the Army failed at strategy and, more importantly, the other side wanted victory more.

Of course, leaders in war must be held accountable for their actions and what results from them. But to use as a measuring stick the

---

*our Army has been steamrollered by a counterinsurgency doctrine that was developed to deal with insurgencies and national wars of independence from Algeria in the 1950s to Indochina in the 1960s*

---

COIN principles put forth in FM 3-24 with all of their underlying and unproven theories and assumptions about insurgencies and how to counter them is wrong, and the Army needs to think hard about where its collective "head is at" in this regard.

---

Colonel Gian P. Gentile, USA, is a Professor in the Department of History at the United States Military Academy at West Point.





COL Gian P. Gentile, USA

It is time for the Army to debate FM 3–24 *critically*, in a wide and open forum. The notion that it was debated sufficiently during the months leading up to its publication is a chimera. Unfortunately, the dialogue within defense circles about counterinsurgency and the Army's new way of war is stale and reflects thinking that is well over 40 years old. In short, our Army has been steamrolled by a counterinsurgency doctrine that was developed by Western military officers to deal with insurgencies and national wars of independence from the mountains of northern Algeria in the 1950s to the swamps of Indochina in the 1960s. The simple truth is that we have bought into a doctrine for countering insurgencies that did not work in the past, as proven by history, and whose efficacy and utility remain highly problematic today. Yet prominent members of the Army and the defense expert community seem to be mired in this out-of-date doctrine.

For example, the widely read counterinsurgency expert Tom Ricks, in his blog *The Best Defense*, regurgitated some pithy catechisms from another COIN expert, the former Australian army officer David Kilcullen, on how to best measure effectiveness in COIN operations in Afghanistan. One of the measurements put forward by Kilcullen and then proffered by Ricks is the stock mantra that in *any* COIN operation, the greater the

number of civilians killed, the greater the number of insurgents made, and therefore the less pacified the area. Sadly, Ricks and many other COIN zealots have accepted the matter as fact and have gone on to believe other such things as matters of faith.

In fact, it is hard to know the effect of killing civilians in war. During World War II, Airmen believed that bombing industrial centers and killing civilians (although at the time Americans referred to them as industrial "workers" to be de-housed) would weaken morale. But studies after the war based on interviews of German civilians showed that bombing actually stiffened German morale to resist in some cases.

In Vietnam, some analysts argue that General Creighton Abrams's (Westmoreland's replacement in 1968) so-called one-war approach pacified the Vietnamese countryside from 1969 to 1972 through a hearts-and-minds counterinsurgency campaign modeled on the "classic" COIN texts of David Galula and Robert Thompson. This is simply *not* supported by current scholarship based on Vietnamese sources. To be sure, a significant level of "pacification" occurred between 1969 and 1972, but that was because many rural areas once under Viet Cong control were depopulated by the destruction of war and the forced resettlement of hundreds of thousands of civilians. In a sense, it was superior Ameri-

can and South Vietnamese firepower that "pacified" the rural countryside by "draining the sea" the Viet Cong swam in.

The point in highlighting these two historical cases is not to explore the moral issues involved in killing civilians in war (which, of course, is a worthwhile subject) but to point out that the theory that underwrites current counterinsurgency practice and thinking is unproven in history and in current practice. Yet that theory has shaped a new way of war and has seduced analysts such as Ricks and Nagl, senior Army officers, and other influential members of the defense community into believing it to be proven in practice. It is this very COIN theory that is driving current U.S. operations in Afghanistan.

It is time for FM 3–24 to be deconstructed and put back together in a similar way as the Army's Active Defense Doctrine was between 1976 and 1982. That previous operational doctrine was thoroughly debated and discussed in open (not closed bureaucratic) forums, and the result of that debate was a better operational doctrine for the time commonly referred to as Airland Battle. In short, FM 3–24 today is the Active Defense Doctrine of 1976; it is incomplete, and the dysfunction of its underlying theory becomes clearer every day. The Army needs a better and more complete operational doctrine for counterinsurgency, one that is less ideological, less driven by think tanks and experts, less influenced by a few clever books and doctoral dissertations on COIN, and less shaped by an artificial history of counterinsurgency. When will the Army undertake a serious revision of this incomplete and misleading doctrine for counterinsurgency? **JFQ**

# Constructing the Legacy of Field Manual 3-24

By JOHN A. NAGL

In late 2005, then–Lieutenant General David Petraeus was appointed to lead the Army’s Combined Arms Command at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. After two high-profile tours in Iraq, the posting to Fort Leavenworth was no one’s idea of a promotion; the dominant local industry is prisons. But to his credit, General Petraeus recognized that this supposedly backwater assignment presented an opportunity to help revamp the Army’s vision of and approach to the wars that it was struggling with in Iraq and Afghanistan. He called on his old West Point classmate, Dr. Conrad Crane, to take charge of a writing team that within just over a year produced Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, in conjunction with a U.S. Marine Corps team under the direction of Lieutenant General James Mattis.

The doctrinal manual was built around two big ideas: first, that protecting the population was the key to success in any counterinsurgency campaign, and second, that to succeed in counterinsurgency, an army has to be able to learn and adapt more rapidly than its enemies. Neither of these ideas was especially new, but both were fundamental changes for an American Army that had traditionally relied on firepower to win its wars. The writing team drew upon the lessons of previous successful and unsuccessful counterinsurgency campaigns, confident that, just as there are principles of conventional war that have endured for hundreds of years, there are lasting principles of “small wars” and insurgencies that are also relevant to the wars of today.<sup>1</sup> It vetted those concepts at a major conference in February 2006 that included experts ranging from veterans of Vietnam and El Salvador to human rights advocates, who deconstructed the draft chapters and made the final product stronger.

The conference kick-started a thorough review process that engaged a broad audience of stakeholders and constituencies. FM 3-24 was extensively reviewed inside the Army and Marine Corps, but its authors also wanted to circulate the doctrine among Servicemembers who were not in the chain of command. They

published a précis of the intellectual core of the doctrine, “Principles, Imperatives, and Paradoxes of Counterinsurgency,” in the March–April 2006 *Military Review*; this article was posted on the influential military blog Small Wars Journal at the time of publication to encourage additional comments from the field.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to this unusually open internal process, FM 3-24 was extensively analyzed by interested parties outside the Armed Forces, including not only the 80 or so participants who attended the Leavenworth review conference but also a much larger audience that commented on a draft version that was leaked online that summer. The writing team carefully reviewed each of the hundreds of comments it received and ultimately published

the first two decades of the Cold War. On the face of it, this frame of reference is markedly different from today, where many of the insurgent movements the United States and its allies must contend with are linked in some way to violent Islamist extremism and the “global insurgency” of the al Qaeda network. The increased role of religiously derived ideologies, combined with the ubiquity of instant global media and communications technology, allows insurgencies to influence, recruit, and fight worldwide. These features, some argue, have already rendered parts of the field manual’s “classical” prescriptions insufficient, if not obsolete.<sup>3</sup> Others, including this author, contend that the differences between previous and current insurgencies are overstated

---

*no previous doctrinal manual had undergone such a public review process before publication or provided so many opportunities for comment both inside and outside the Army/Marine Corps tent*

---

a manual that was much better for the input of so many. No previous doctrinal manual had undergone such a public review process before publication or provided so many opportunities for comment to both those inside and outside the Army/Marine Corps tent.

This review process raised the stakes for a manual that would ordinarily have attracted no attention outside the Army and little inside it. Rightly or wrongly, FM 3-24 became more than a routine doctrinal publication; it became a symbol of something more expansive. To some, it pointed to a better way to confront the security challenges of the future, and to others, it was a misguided application of old concepts to fundamentally new problems.

Detractors argue that FM 3-24 takes a somewhat anachronistic approach to the problem of insurgency. It is true that the manual draws heavily from the “classical” counterinsurgency theorists such as David Galula and Sir Robert Thompson and their experiences combating the Maoist insurgencies and anticolonial conflicts that marked

and that it was necessary for a military that had largely deemphasized its understanding of counterinsurgency over the preceding 30 years to regain a grasp of insurgency’s fundamental dynamics and challenges.<sup>4</sup>

FM 3-24 has also been criticized for being overly intellectual.<sup>5</sup> However, there is little doubt that the manual accomplished its main objective of setting a baseline understanding of counterinsurgency for the Army and Marine Corps. Commanders on the ground could adapt its principles and translate them into clear operational and tactical guidance as needed, as General Petraeus did in Iraq and General Stanley McChrystal has done in Afghanistan.<sup>6</sup> The field manual does not explain all the nuances of operations and tactics commanders will need in Iraq,

---

**Dr. John A. Nagl is President of the Center for a New American Security. A retired Army officer, he served in both wars in Iraq and as a member of the writing team that produced Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*.**

Afghanistan, and future battlefields; nor does it prescribe U.S. grand strategy, America's role in the world, or the future of warfare. That was never intended.

FM 3-24 is far from the Army's only doctrinal manual, or the only one that shows the influence of a new pattern of thinking about the nature of the wars we are fighting today and are likely to fight in years to come. In fact, the publication of FM 3-0, *Operations*, in February 2008 was arguably more important than the publication of FM 3-24; *Operations* is the Army's fundamental operational doctrine, the baseline that describes how the Army sees itself and its role on the battlefields of the future. It is not shy in describing itself as a significant break from the past:

*This edition of FM 3-0, the first update since September 11, 2001, is a revolutionary departure from past doctrine. It describes an operational concept where commanders employ offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations simultaneously as part of an interdependent joint force to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative, accepting prudent risk to create opportunities to achieve decisive results. Just as the 1976 edition of FM 100-5 began to take the Army from the rice paddies of Vietnam to the battlefield of Western Europe,*

---

*a completely different writing team produced a document that underlined the applicability of the two big ideas of Field Manual 3-24*

---

*this edition will take us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century urban battlefields among the people without losing our capabilities to dominate the higher conventional end of the spectrum of conflict.<sup>7</sup>*

As the Army's capstone doctrinal manual, FM 3-0 went through an even more rigorous internal review than did FM 3-24. It is thus significant that, with the benefit of analysis of a year's experience in applying the principles of FM 3-24 in the field, a completely different writing team produced a document that underlined the applicability of the two big ideas of FM 3-24, particularly its focus on protecting the population in order to win their support. As General William Wallace wrote in his foreword to the manual:

*The operational environment in which this persistent conflict will be waged will be complex, multidimensional, and increasingly fought "among the people." Previously, we sought to separate people from the battlefield so that we could engage and destroy enemies and seize terrain. While we recognize our enduring requirement to fight and win, we also recognize that people are frequently part of the terrain and their support is a principal determinant of success in future conflicts.<sup>8</sup>*

Field Manual 3-07, *Stability Operations*, was published in October 2008; produced by yet another writing team, having undergone another review process, its prescriptions were also in keeping with FM 3-0 and FM 3-24.



John A. Nagl

Joint Publication 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, was published in October 2009, again with similar prescriptions. And most recently, the Army Capstone Concept, entitled *Operational Adaptability*, was published December 21, 2009. Written under the direction of Brigadier General H.R. McMaster and extensively reviewed inside the Army and by panels of outside experts, the Capstone Concept was also intentionally posted in draft form on the Small Wars Journal Web site 3 months before final publication to request additional comment from the field.<sup>9</sup> As the Capstone Concept example shows, it is distinctly possible that FM 3-24's role in inspiring a more open doctrinal development process will be as important as its operational prescriptions. As





for the  
**Institute for National Strategic Studies**

**NEW**  
from **NDU Press**



### Strategic Forum 252

#### *Avoiding a Crisis of Confidence in the U.S. Nuclear Deterrent*

John P. Caves, Jr., argues that the United States needs to modernize and ensure the long-term reliability and responsiveness of its aging nuclear deterrent force and infrastructure. He opens with a hypothetical scenario that brings home the profound implications that a future crisis of confidence in its nuclear deterrent would have for U.S. security. Without a reliable nuclear deterrent, the United States cannot otherwise safely reduce its nuclear weapons, responsibly ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, deter and contain challenges from resurgent nuclear near-peers, and effectively dissuade allies and partners from acquiring their own nuclear weapons.

### Strategic Forum 251

#### *U.S.-Cambodia Defense Relations: Defining New Possibilities*

Lewis M. Stern reviews the recent history of U.S.-Cambodia defense relations, showing how Cambodia's lax border controls, widespread corruption, and active arms trade have made that country a staging ground for numerous activities that challenge the safety and well-being of the region. He argues that U.S. interests would be well served by a stepped-up program of cooperation with Cambodia in areas such as counterterrorism, peacekeeping, counternarcotics, disaster response, and stability operations. U.S. early investment in Cambodia's future—beginning with support for the regional peace process—would provide a useful foundation for cooperation and have a beneficial impact on Southeast Asia as a whole.

General William Caldwell remarked about the writing process of the *Army Stability Operations* doctrine in 2009:

*Traditionally, when we write Army doctrine, it's done in-house. The Army has a very deliberate set procedure, as many of you might imagine, as we can only do in the United States military, but we really broke the mold in doing this one. If you look back and you look at how we wrote the counterinsurgency manual, it really was the first deviation from the way army manuals are written, done in 2006 in a much more open and collaborative manner, many [in] academia and others being brought into the process. We took the lessons learned from that, applied them to this, and expanded even further going into the international community, reaching out across many, many different nations in addition to all the normal folks we talked about at the very beginning.<sup>10</sup>*

Future military doctrine should benefit from FM 3-24's example of requesting input from the field and from outsiders, making the preparation of doctrine less about traditional practice handed down from past generations and more about constant learning and adaptation based on current experience and collaboration with a broad group of concerned partners. This legacy may be as important for the future of the U.S. military as the manual's twin pillars of protecting the population and constantly learning so we can adapt to the demands of the wars we are fighting, rather than the wars we would prefer to fight. **JFQ**

<sup>4</sup> See John A. Nagl and Brian M. Burton, "Thinking Globally and Acting Locally: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Modern Wars—A Reply to Jones and Smith," *Journal of Strategic Studies* (February 2010), 123–138.

<sup>5</sup> See Bing West, *The Strongest Tribe* (New York: Random House, 2008), 120–123.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, David Petraeus, "Multi-national Force–Iraq Commander's Counterinsurgency Guidance," *Military Review* (September–October 2008), 2–4; International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), "ISAF Commander's Counterinsurgency Guidance," August 25, 2009, available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2009/08/isaf-counterinsurgency-guidanc/>>.

<sup>7</sup> William S. Wallace, "Foreword," Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, February 2008). Emphasis in original.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Haddick, "The Army Wants Your Comments on Its New Capstone Concept," September 22, 2009, available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2009/09/the-army-wants-your-comments-o/>>.

<sup>10</sup> General William B. Caldwell IV, "FM 3-07 Stability Operations: A Comprehensive Approach to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," remarks at the Brookings Institution, March 27, 2009, 7–8, available at <[www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2009/0327\\_stability/20090327\\_stability.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2009/0327_stability/20090327_stability.pdf)>.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Kalev I. Sepp, "Best Practices in Counterinsurgency," *Military Review* (May–June 2005), 8–12; Robert M. Cassidy, "Back to the Street without Joy: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Vietnam and Other Small Wars," *Parameters* (Summer 2004), 73–83.

<sup>2</sup> Eliot A. Cohen et al., "Principles, Imperatives, and Paradoxes of Counterinsurgency," *Military Review* (March–April 2006), 49–53. As of February 2010, it had attracted no comments; see <<http://council.smallwarsjournal.com/showthread.php?p=2149>>.

<sup>3</sup> See, most notably, Frank G. Hoffman, "Neo-Classical Counterinsurgency?" *Parameters* (Summer 2007), 71–87; David Kilcullen, "Counterinsurgency Redux," *Survival* (Winter 2006/2007), 111–130; and Steven Metz, *Rethinking Insurgency* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, June 2007).

Visit the NDU Press Web site  
for more information on publications  
at [ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu)

# Freeing the Army from the COUNTERINSURGENCY STRAITJACKET

By GIAN P. GENTILE

In October 2006, while in command of a cavalry squadron in northwest Baghdad, I received an email with an attached document from my division commander, then–Major General James D. Thurman. General Thurman sent the email to all of the division’s brigade and battalion commanders asking for input on the important document attached, which was a draft of Field Manual (FM) 3–24, *Counterinsurgency*. Over the next couple of weeks, I tried to read the draft manual closely and provide comments to the commanding general. Alas, though, like probably most of the other commanders, I was so busy carrying out a population-centric counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign on the ground in west Baghdad that I never found time to get to it. While anecdotal, my experience suggests a microcosm of the U.S. Army. The Army has been so busy since FM 3–24 came out 4 years ago that it has been unable to have a Service-wide dialogue on the manual.

It is time to have that debate. The COIN “experts,” some of whom were the writers of FM 3–24, often talk about how thoroughly the manual was debated and vetted. This may be true in the more narrow sense of a small cluster of senior officers, civilian academics, civilian pundits, and media personnel. But it was in no way debated and discussed and challenged, then taken apart and put back together, as was Army doctrine when the Army, no longer in combat, had the luxury to patiently and thoroughly deconstruct its doctrine between 1976 and 1982. During that period, over 110 articles were published in the Army’s professional journal, *Military Review*, that provoked a wide-ranging debate. We need a similar type of professional and wide-ranging discussion about FM 3–24, since we have had it as an operational doctrine in our hands for going on 4 years.

Both the field and the institutional Army have gained much experience over these past 4 years in actually fighting two major COIN campaigns. Should we not consider that experience and integrate it into a revised

doctrine for counterinsurgency? The German army in World War I went through major doctrinal introspection and then change after only 2 years of combat on the Western Front. It drew on a vast amount of combat experience (often from the lower ranks of the army), codified that experience into an operational doctrine, trained on it, and then put it into practice against the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

It is troubling that the Army today, after nearly 4 years of experience in conducting major COIN campaigns, cannot see fit to revise the doctrine it has now. It is also troubling that some of the leading COIN experts and Army officers seem unwilling to accept the need for serious debate and the possibility

---

*when the President tells the Army to stop the pirates from coming out of Somalia, the only operational method the Army has in its doctrinal toolkit is an expeditionary campaign dispersed into the local population to protect them and win their hearts and their minds*

---

of a fundamental revision of current doctrine. It is as if they have become so convinced of the efficacy and rightness of current Army COIN doctrine that they cannot imagine alternatives and revisions based on recent hard experience. In essence, and sadly, the Army seems to have lost the ability to think creatively.

FM 3–24 is not perfect, and it is not the Bible on counterinsurgency; its principles and methods are not timeless in warfare, and more importantly, they have not been shown to work in past and current operational practice as promised. But after listening to COIN experts, one comes away with the impression that the principles of COIN as laid out in FM 3–24 are irrefutable and that they must stay in place, without challenge. The experts often

hold as an incontrovertible rule that they believe these principles must be followed in *any* counterinsurgency: the people are the “prize,” or the center of gravity, and they *must* be protected.<sup>2</sup>

Carl von Clausewitz said that a center of gravity is something to be discovered, and it could vary depending on the aims of the war being fought.<sup>3</sup> Yet the COIN experts essentially tell us that there is no need to discover a center of gravity or even an operational method because the rules of our current COIN doctrine have already done the discovering and planning for us. For instance, if there is one hard and fast prescription in our doctrine that must always be followed as a rule, it is that the people must always be protected because they are the “prize.” This concrete prescription therefore demands a specific operational method of large numbers of boots on the ground—doing “clear, hold, and build”—thereby winning hearts and minds. So, for example, when the President of the United States tells the Army to stop the pirates from coming out of Somalia, or to allow no more underwear bombers from Yemen, the only operational method that the Army has in its doctrinal toolkit is an expeditionary campaign of multiple combat brigades dispersed into the local population to protect them and win their hearts and their minds.

This is how being doctrinaire with counterinsurgency can lead to dogmatism—in other words, an inability to move beyond, when needed and called for, prescribed principles, methods, and rules. Unfortunately, the dogmatism of counterinsurgency has eclipsed strategy and, even more troublingly, shapes policy. To break out of this military dogmatism, FM 3–24 must be deconstructed and put back together but without the constraining proscriptions that in essence have been turned into rules and binding principles that have made current COIN doctrine so hidebound and straitjacketed.

The straitjacket of counterinsurgency makes it difficult to appreciate that it is

problematic whether or not the United States can achieve a positive strategic outcome with counterinsurgency in distant, foreign countries. Any temporary tactical advantage U.S. forces achieve with COIN, whether with force of arms or cash, does not translate into the creation of a stable, competent, and most important, legitimate pro-Western regime. On the contrary, as seen in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the practice of population-centric counterinsurgency not only cultivates an “expectations gap” between what the U.S. military can deliver with money and infrastructure projects and what the indigenous government can deliver. Counterinsurgency American style

Ironically, the historical case study that COIN experts focus on most to prove that better COIN methods can work—General Creighton Abrams and the Vietnam War—actually proves how essential firepower was to whatever success was enjoyed against the North Vietnamese and South Vietnamese communists. What pacified, albeit temporarily, the rural South Vietnamese countryside between 1969 and 1972 when General Abrams was in command was not better COIN programs and methods, but rather the death and destruction of military operations using firepower and the resultant either willing or forced depopulation of the countryside. And

php?storyId=90200038>; for a current example of this kind of formulaic thinking, see Michael T. Flynn, Matt Pottinger, and Paul D. Bachelor, “Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan,” Center for a New American Security, Washington, DC, January 2010, available at <[www.cnas.org/files/documents/press/AfghanIntel\\_Flynn\\_Jan2010\\_code507\\_voices.pdf](http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/press/AfghanIntel_Flynn_Jan2010_code507_voices.pdf)>.

<sup>3</sup> For an excellent analysis of Clausewitz and “rules,” see Clifford J. Rogers, “Clausewitz, Genius, and the Rules,” *The Journal of Military History* 66 (October 2002), 1167–1176.

<sup>4</sup> For two conflicting views in this regard, see Nir Rosen and Tom Ricks on the latter’s blog *The Best Defense*, “Nir Rosen: Stop the Iraq Madness,” February 23, 2010, available at <[http://ricks.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/02/23/nir\\_rosen\\_stop\\_the\\_iraq\\_madness](http://ricks.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/02/23/nir_rosen_stop_the_iraq_madness)>.

<sup>5</sup> On the atrophy of combined arms competencies, see Sean MacFarland, Michael Shields, and Jeffrey Snow, “The King and I: The Impending Crisis in Field Artillery’s Ability to Provide Fire Support to Maneuver Commanders,” available at <[www.npr.org/documents/2008/may/artillery-whitepaper.pdf](http://www.npr.org/documents/2008/may/artillery-whitepaper.pdf)>.

<sup>6</sup> In this regard, see John Arquilla, “The New Rules of War,” *Foreign Policy* (March–April 2010).

<sup>7</sup> The stock explanation of the Vietnam War that argues that General Abrams had turned the war around and goes so far as to further suggest that it was actually won is found in Lewis Sorley, *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and Final Tragedy of America’s Last Years in Vietnam* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1999). There is a large body of scholarship, however, that refutes the notion that changed American military tactics after 1968 and programs of pacification had pacified the countryside. See James Walker Trullinger, Jr., *Village at War: An Account of Revolution in Vietnam* (New York: Longman, 1980); Eric Bergerud, *The Dynamics of Defeat: The Vietnam War in Hau Nghia Province* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991); Richard A. Hunt, *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam’s Hearts and Minds* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995); David W.P. Elliot, *The Vietnamese War: Revolution and Social Change in the Mekong Delta, 1930–1975*, vols. 1 and 2 (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2003); and Thomas L. Ahern, Jr., *Vietnam Unclassified: The CIA and Counterinsurgency* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2010).

<sup>8</sup> John A. Nagl, review of Brian McAllister Linn, *The Echo of Battle: The Army’s Way of War*, in *The RUSI Journal* 153 (April 2008), 82–83.

*one might even conclude that COIN experts have no intention or possibility of really learning or adapting because they seem to presume to know what the wars of the future will be*

also breeds its own opposition inside the indigenous population thanks to a large, unwanted U.S. military footprint. While advocates of American nationbuilding efforts might argue that Iraq has turned the corner and is on the path to peaceful reconciliation through the political process, recent reports of violence and serious and ongoing divisions in Iraqi society suggest that it is just too early to tell.<sup>4</sup>

The COIN straitjacket has produced within some circles in the Army and the greater defense establishment a rather curious way of thinking about firepower. It has come to be viewed as something dirty, bad, and to be avoided. This negative treatment combined with the COIN notion of learning and adapting toward better practices has replaced what should be the core principle of combined arms competencies. As a result, the Army’s warfighting skills have atrophied.<sup>5</sup> We can expect, however, in the present and in the future that we will have to fight, and we also can expect to do many other things as well. Yet this never-ending drumbeat by COIN experts of learning and adapting only toward better methods has taken our eyes off the ball of combined arms competencies through the coordinated use of maneuver, intelligence, and firepower.

In a twist of circumstances, one might even conclude that COIN experts have no intention or possibility of really learning or adapting because they seem to presume to know what the wars of the future will be, and they have determined the best way to fight them.<sup>6</sup>

General Abrams was fully aware, along with his commanders and staff, that it was American air-delivered firepower that underwrote pacification programs and the ongoing Vietnamization of the war.<sup>7</sup>

War essentially is about death and destruction, its hard hand. Unfortunately, the dogma of counterinsurgency has seduced folks inside and outside the American defense establishment into thinking that instead of war and the application of military force being used as a last resort and with restraint, it should be used at the start and that it can change “entire societies” for the better.<sup>8</sup> To be sure, the Army must be proficient at counterinsurgency and nationbuilding, but more importantly, it must maintain intellectual rigor. Seriously debating and challenging current operational doctrine is hard while fighting a war at the same time, but it is not impossible—and it is an absolute necessity. Perhaps the Army needs to find the time to do it now. **JFQ**

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> On the German army, see Timothy Lupfer, *The Dynamics of Doctrine: The Changes in German Tactical Doctrine During the First World War* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1981); and Bruce I. Gudmundson, *Stormtroop Tactics: Innovation in the German Army, 1914–1918* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1989).

<sup>2</sup> Statement by Peter Mansoor in audio of Guy Raz, National Public Radio, “Army Focus on Counterinsurgency Debated Within,” May 6, 2008, available at <[www.npr.org/templates/story/story](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story)>.



# Learning and Adapting to Win

By JOHN A. NAGL

*There is no single defining American way of war. It changes over time, and it should change over time, adapting appropriately to the most relevant threats to our national security, and the means by which that security is best preserved. As the godfather of theory himself, Carl von Clausewitz, once observed, war is but an instrument of policy, beholden to it. And because policies change, the conduct of war must also change.*

—Admiral Michael G. Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

**A**dmiral Mullen highlights Clausewitz's dictum that war is *not* essentially "about death and destruction"<sup>2</sup> but is fundamentally an instrument of policy designed to achieve political aims. It is this understanding of war that must drive how military strategy and doctrine are developed, and the metric against which they must be judged. The counterinsurgency field manual must therefore be evaluated against its record in assisting in the accomplishment of national objectives.

It meets this test. Since the implementation of a coherent counterinsurgency campaign there, Iraq has seen a dramatic reduction in violence and a strengthening of the institutions necessary for self-government. There were multiple causes for this chain of events, including the Awakening movement, sectarian separation in Baghdad, and "cease-fire" initiatives by some insurgent groups, as well as the U.S. troop surge and new operational and tactical approaches enacted by Generals David Petraeus and Raymond Odierno. But these variables interacted with one another: the Awakening gained momentum after the surge was announced, and surge forces, once in place, reinforced sectarian separation and dissuaded insurgent groups from escalating hostilities.<sup>3</sup>

Critics contend that the implementation of a counterinsurgency campaign had nothing to do with what transpired in Iraq over the past 3 years, but it is no accident that the rediscovery of counterinsurgency principles culminating in the writing of Field Manual (FM) 3–24 coincided with this fairly dramatic reversal of fortune. By the end of 2006, Iraq was on the verge of civil war, while by the end of 2008, large swaths of Afghanistan were outside the reach of government. These failures did not occur because the United States did not kill enough insurgents in these conflicts; they hap-

pened because the United States and its allies failed to pursue coordinated, well-resourced counterinsurgency campaigns aimed at separating the militants from the population and strengthening the legitimacy of the Iraqi and Afghan governments.

FM 3–24 is no Bible; it is slated to be revisited and rewritten within the next year or so, since learning organizations must continuously adapt to the demands of ongoing conflict. The lead author of the previous effort, Conrad Crane, will also be involved in the next one; he has been carefully following the many lively discussions about FM 3–24 that have raged since its publication just over 3 years ago, after the most extensive doctrinal review process in Army history to that point.

In fact, we now know that Major General J.D. Thurman, then commanding the Fourth Infantry Division in combat in Baghdad, distributed the draft doctrine to all of his battalion and brigade commanders in the fall of 2006, while the manual was undergoing final revisions. Clearly, the writing of FM 3–24, after years of waging war in Afghanistan and Iraq, "drew on a vast amount of combat experience, often from the lower ranks of the [U.S.] Army, codified that experience into an operational doctrine, trained on it, and then put it into practice against the enemy."<sup>4</sup> If this is not the first time in history when commanders literally under fire were given the opportunity to comment on pending doctrine, it is certainly proof that the net was spread very wide indeed while the manual was under revision.

The coming revision of FM 3–24 is unlikely to satisfy the criticisms of those who decry the doctrine's focus on the population, even those who perhaps understandably were "just too darn busy with carrying out a population-centric counterinsurgency campaign on the ground in west Baghdad in that

fall of 2006"<sup>5</sup> to comment on the last version. There is simply too much historical evidence from the last century of counterinsurgency campaigns that securing and influencing the population, while messy and slow, are the only ways to succeed in these wars among the people. This approach is being tested on a daily basis in Afghanistan where, as Admiral Mullen recently noted:

*[F]rankly the battlefield isn't necessarily a field anymore. It's in the minds of the people. It's what they believe to be true that matters. And when they believe that they are safer with Afghan and coalition troops in their midst and local governance at their service, they will resist the intimidation of the Taliban and refuse to permit their land from ever again becoming a safe haven for terror.<sup>6</sup>*

Unfortunately, the debate over FM 3–24 has largely consisted of critics without an alternative course of action of their own complaining that no alternatives to population-centric counterinsurgency were considered. They have ignored the rich body of history written by many practitioners of population-centric counterinsurgency who have learned from their own experience in this kind of war. They range from David Galula in Algeria<sup>7</sup> and Sir Robert Thompson in a number of British campaigns<sup>8</sup> to current practitioners Dale Kuehl<sup>9</sup> and Jim Crider,<sup>10</sup> both of whom independently derived many of the same principles identified by Galula. The best practices from the historical record are similar to those used by the most successful commanders in our current campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan: counterinsurgency campaigns that focus first on protecting the population have a historically higher rate of success than those campaigns that do not.<sup>11</sup>

Many critiques of the counterinsurgency manual have also fostered misconceptions

about what it really says. The core of the manual is its middle chapters, which cover sociocultural intelligence, campaign design using that information to determine problem sets, and then execution along logical lines of operation to achieve solutions. Perhaps the most important influence of FM 3–24 on American doctrine has been through that concept of design, a contribution from the Marines that has become a part of all subsequent doctrine. Campaign design compels commanders to apply different combinations of information activities and combat operations, along with efforts aimed at improving governance and the economy, all in pursuit of a locally defined legitimacy that will sustain popular support.<sup>12</sup> This complex and iterative plan must be conducted in concert with many partners. While most of those partners have not yet developed the same degree of proficiency that the Army and Marines have displayed in recent operations in Afghanistan, efforts to increase civilian counterinsurgency capacity continue.<sup>13</sup>

The process of campaign design allows U.S. forces to continually adapt to the demands of the neighborhood they are fighting in, determining the appropriate balance between killing the enemy and protecting the population on each block and at each moment. At times, the priority will be on combat operations, as it is currently in Navy operations against pirates in Somalia. At other times and in other places, the focus will be on training host-nation security forces, as it is in campaigns led by U.S. Special Forces in Yemen and Pakistan. In none of these three current theaters of conflict has the United States decided to conduct “an expeditionary campaign of multiple combat brigades dispersed out into the local population to protect them and win their hearts and their minds,”<sup>14</sup> rendering the argument that large-scale counterinsurgency is “the only operational method that the American Army has in its doctrinal toolkit”<sup>15</sup> demonstrably false. Large-scale counterinsurgency campaigns are an instrument in the Nation’s repertoire of different ways to apply force to achieve political objectives, but an extremely costly one that should not be used except when it is absolutely necessary to achieving vital national objectives.

But when large-scale counterinsurgency is required—as it was in Iraq after the destruction of Saddam Hussein’s government and the disbanding of his army, and as it is now in Afghanistan in support of President Hamid Karzai’s regime—the U.S. Armed

Forces must know how to practice large-scale counterinsurgency, and how to do it well. FM 3–24 is not perfect, but it has helped the Army and Marines understand and apply

*large-scale counterinsurgency campaigns should not be used except when it is absolutely necessary to achieving vital national objectives*

the principles of counterinsurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan, just as FM 100–5 helped the Army, Marines, and Air Force come to terms with the principles of AirLand Battle a generation ago. FM 3–24 underwent an extraordinarily extensive debate both during the writing process and afterward; those who did not have time to suggest alternative ways to defeat insurgents at the time of publication have had sufficient opportunity since. The manual’s focus on protecting the population has been battle-tested on a daily basis, and an upcoming revision will collect, analyze, and incorporate lessons from ongoing conflicts and from past campaigns to make good doctrine even better.

U.S. military doctrine, from FM 3–24 through FM 3–0 to Joint Publication 3–24, is flexible, adaptable, and well suited to the broad spectrum of threats America faces today. It frees the military from a misguided belief that there is a single U.S. way of war that is essentially “about death and destruction.” Instead, it teaches that the Army, and the Nation, must be able to fight and win along the entire spectrum of conflict, from conventional war against a conventional enemy to training and equipping the security forces of our friends and partners around the globe before an insurgency reaches a degree of virulence that demands a substantial U.S. troop deployment to subdue. This doctrinal revolution requires that all officers of all branches of the U.S. Government shed the intellectual straitjacket of a single American way of war and understand the complex reality of a world wherein we must apply all the tools of national power in many different ways to achieve the goals of our policy. The process of freeing ourselves from a limited understanding of the nature of war will be uncomfortable for some, but this discomfort is a necessary sacrifice if America’s Armed Forces are to uphold their solemn obligation to preserve the security of the American people. **JFQ**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Admiral Michael G. Mullen, “Landon Lecture Series Remarks,” March 3, 2010, available at <[www.jcs.mil/speech.aspx?id=1336](http://www.jcs.mil/speech.aspx?id=1336)>.

<sup>2</sup> Gian P. Gentile, “Freeing the Army from the Counterinsurgency Straitjacket,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 58 (3<sup>d</sup> Quarter, July 2010).

<sup>3</sup> The author thanks Lieutenant Colonel Paul Yingling, USA, for this point.

<sup>4</sup> Gentile.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Mullen.

<sup>7</sup> David Galula, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956–1958* (Washington, DC: RAND, 2006); David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Praeger, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1978).

<sup>9</sup> Kuehl’s 1–5 Cavalry relieved 8–10 Cavalry in Ameriyah in late 2006. See Dale Kuehl, “Testing Galula in Ameriyah: The People Are the Key,” *Military Review* (March–April 2009), available at <[http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview\\_20090430\\_art012.pdf](http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20090430_art012.pdf)>. See also Linda Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq* (New York: Public Affairs, 2008), especially chapter 9.

<sup>10</sup> Jim Crider, *Inside the Surge: One Commander’s Lessons in Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2009), available at <[www.cnas.org/node/974](http://www.cnas.org/node/974)>; Jim Crider, “A View from Inside the Surge,” *Military Review* (March–April 2009), available at <[http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview\\_20090430\\_art013.pdf](http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20090430_art013.pdf)>.

<sup>11</sup> The best practices from dozens of counterinsurgency campaigns have been compiled by Kalev “Gunner” Sepp, a veteran of the indirect approach in a counterinsurgency campaign in El Salvador. See Sepp, “Best Practices in Counterinsurgency,” *Military Review* (May–June 2005), available at <[www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awgate/milreview/sepp.pdf](http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awgate/milreview/sepp.pdf)>. See also Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian, eds., who in *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare* (London: Osprey, 2008) dissect 11 counterinsurgency campaigns in search of common principles and lessons learned, including the current campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan.

<sup>12</sup> The author is indebted to Conrad Crane for this insight.

<sup>13</sup> John A. Nagl, “The Expeditionary Imperative,” *The Wilson Quarterly* (Winter 2009), available at <[http://wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=wq.essay&essay\\_id=501753&forumaction=forums.post](http://wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=wq.essay&essay_id=501753&forumaction=forums.post)>.

<sup>14</sup> Gentile.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

**NEW**  
from **NDU Press**

Published for the Center for the Study of  
Weapons of Mass Destruction



### WMD Center Case Study 3

#### *The Origins of Nunn-Lugar and Cooperative Threat Reduction*

by Paul I. Bernstein and Jason D. Wood

As the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991, deteriorating political and socioeconomic conditions gave rise to concerns over the future security of the Soviet nuclear arsenal. Anticipating the possibility of loosely controlled nuclear weapons inside the former Soviet Union, key leaders in Congress and experts in the policy and academic communities began to assess this threat and to consider approaches to reducing the danger it posed to U.S. and global security. Out of these investigations emerged the initial Nunn-Lugar legislation and the broader Cooperative Threat Reduction program—an unprecedented effort to reduce nuclear dangers by securing or eliminating Russian weapons systems and related materials and capabilities using aid from the U.S. Government. In this study the authors trace how Nunn-Lugar came to be, focusing on the key leaders, facilitators, and practitioners who recognized the need and opportunity—at a pivotal moment in history—to pioneer a program of cooperative security between two former adversaries



Published for the Center for Technology and  
National Security Policy

### Bio-inspired Innovation and National Security

Edited by Robert E. Armstrong, Mark D. Drapeau, Cheryl A. Loeb, and James J. Valdes

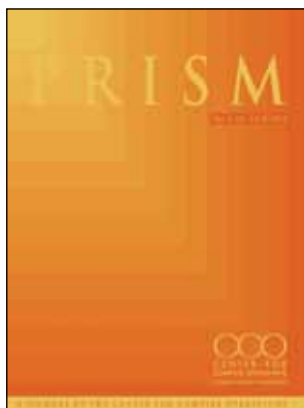
Despite the vital importance of the emerging area of biotechnology and its role in defense planning and policymaking, no definitive book has been written on the topic for the defense policymaker, the military student, and the private-sector bio-scientist interested in the “emerging opportunities market” of national security. This edited volume is intended to help close this gap and provide the necessary backdrop for thinking strategically about biology in defense planning and policymaking.

This volume is about applications of the biological sciences, here called “biologically inspired innovations,” to the military. Rather than treating biology as a series of threats to be dealt with, such innovations generally approach the biological sciences as a set of opportunities for the military to gain strategic advantage over adversaries. These opportunities range from looking at everything from genes to brains, from enhancing human performance to creating renewable energy, and from sensing the environment around us to harnessing its power.



Visit the NDU Press Web site for more information on publications at  
[ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu)





New Journal from NDU Press

# PRISM

National Defense University is pleased to announce publication of issue no. 3 (June 2010) of *PRISM*, a quarterly journal on complex operations. Articles in this issue explore development assistance, deploying individuals versus deploying departments, weak states and security assistance, Yemen, and war in complex environments, among other topics. The regular "Lessons Learned" feature looks at the U.S. Department of Agriculture experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, while a new feature, "From the Field", reports on the "community-based" approach to counterinsurgency in Mindanao, Philippines. Issue 3 also includes an interview with Peter Pace and book reviews of *Climate Change and Armed Conflict* and *Wars of Necessity, Wars of Choice*.



*PRISM* explores, promotes, and debates emerging thought and best practices as civilian capacity increases in order to address challenges in stability, reconstruction, security, counterinsurgency, and irregular warfare. Published by NDU Press for the Center for Complex Operations, *PRISM* welcomes articles on a broad range of complex operations issues, especially civil-military integration. Manuscript submissions should be between 2,500 and 6,000 words and sent via email to [prism@ndu.edu](mailto:prism@ndu.edu).



## The National Defense University Foundation

*...promoting excellence and innovation in education...*



The National Defense University (NDU) Foundation was pleased to support three writing competitions conducted in 2010 by NDU Press. The Foundation congratulates the authors and winners of the following:

**The Secretary of Defense National Security Essay Competition.** The Secretary of Defense initiated this competition in 2007 to inspire critical and innovative thinking on how to adapt national security institutions to meet current and future challenges.

**The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategic Essay Competition.** In the 29<sup>th</sup> annual competition, the Chairman challenged students in the Nation's joint professional military education institutions to think and write creatively about national security strategy.

**The Joint Force Quarterly Kiley Awards.** In honor of the former Director of NDU Press, Dr. Fred Kiley, the four most influential essays from 2009 were selected for recognition. Articles were evaluated for their contributions toward the *JFQ* mission of continuing joint professional military education and security studies.

The final round of the competitions was held May 18–19, 2010, at Fort Lesley J. McNair, with 23 faculty members from joint professional military education institutions serving as judges. The winning essays are posted on the NDU Press Web site at [ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu) and will be published in Issue 59 (October 2010) of *JFQ*.

The NDU Foundation promotes excellence and innovation in education by nurturing high standards of scholarship, leadership, and professionalism. The National Defense University depends on the NDU Foundation to support university activities that are not covered by Federal appropriations. Many activities at the heart of a sound university environment—such as endowments, honorariums, competitions, and awards—cannot be paid for with government funds. Thus, the NDU Foundation offers Americans the opportunity to invest in the Nation's security by supporting these activities.

Research and writing competitions are conducted by NDU Press with the generous financial support of the NDU Foundation. The Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established in 1982 to support National Defense University.

For more information, visit the NDU Foundation Web site at [www.ndufoundation.org](http://www.ndufoundation.org).



# JFQ

**JOINT FORCE QUARTERLY**

Published for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by National Defense University Press  
National Defense University, Washington, DC

